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ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A Weekly Journal.

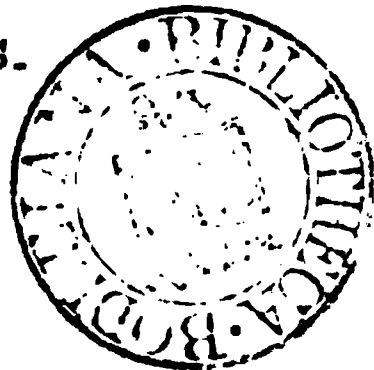
CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

NEW SERIES.

VOLUME IX.



FROM NOVEMBER 16, 1872, TO APRIL 26, 1873.

Including No. 207 to No. 230.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED AT N^o. 26, WELLINGTON STREET;
AND BY MESSRS. CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

1873.

LONDON

C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, DUKE STREET, LINCOLN'S-INN-FIELDS.

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THE EXTRA CHRISTMAS NUMBER FOR 1872,

ENTITLED

DOOM'S DAY CAMP,

WILL BE FOUND AT THE END OF THE VOLUME.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 207. NEW SERIES

SAURDAY, NOVEMBER 16. 1872.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BORN AND THE BORN."

CHAPTER XVII. LEMUEL BLOUNT.

NEXT morning, at about half-past ten, as Laura and I sat in our breakfast-room, a hired carriage with two horses, which had evidently been driven at a hard pace, passed our window at a walk. The driver, who was leading his beasts, asked a question of Thomas Jones, who was rolling the gravel on the court-yard before the window; and then he led them round the corner toward the steward's house.

The carriage was empty; but in another minute it was followed by the person whom we might presume to have been its occupant. He turned towards our window as he passed, so that we had a full view of this new visitor.

He was a man who looked past sixty, slow-paced, and very solemn; he was dressed in a clumsy black suit; his face was large, square, and sallow; his cheek and chin were smoothly shorn and blue. His hat was low-crowned, and broad in the brim. He had a cotton umbrella in his big-gloved hand, and a coloured pocket-handkerchief sticking out of his pocket. A great bunch of seals hung from his watch-chain under his black waistcoat. He was walking so slowly that we had no difficulty in observing these details; and he stopped before the hall-door, as if doubtful whether he should enter there. A word, however, from Thomas Jones, set him right, and he in turn disappeared round the corner.

We did not know what to make of this figure, whom we now conjectured to have come in quest of the shipwrecked stranger.

Thomas Jones ran round before him to the door of the steward's house, which he

opened; and the new-comer thanked him with a particularly kind smile.

He knocked on chance at the door to the right, and the voice of our unknown guest told him to come in.

"Oh, Mr. Blount!" said the young gentleman, rising, hesitating, and then tendering his hand very respectfully, and looking in the sensible, vulgar face of the old man as if he were by no means sure how that tender might be received. "I hope, sir, I have not quite lost your friendship. I hope I retain some, were it ever so little, of the goodwill you once bore me. I hope, at least, that you will allow me to say I am glad to see you; I feel it."

The old man bowed his head, holding it a little on one side while the stranger spoke; it was the attitude of listening rather than of respect. When the young gentleman had done speaking, his visitor raised his head again. The young man smiled faintly, and still extended his hand, looking very pale.

Mr. Blount did not smile in answer; his countenance was very sombre, one might say sad.

"I never yet, sir, refused the hand of any man living when offered to me in sincerity, especially that of one in whom I felt, I may say, at one time a warm interest, although he may have given me reason to alter the opinion I then entertained of him."

Thus speaking, he gravely took the young man's hand, and shook it in a thoughtful, melancholy way, lowering his head again as he had done before.

"I don't ask how my uncle feels towards me," said the young man, half inquiringly.

"You need not," answered his visitor.

"I am at all events very much obliged to you," said the young man, humbly,

"for your friendship, Mr. Blount. There is, I know, but one way of interesting your sympathy, and that is by telling you frankly how deep and true my repentance is; how I execrate my ingratitude; how I deplore my weakness and criminality." He paused, looking earnestly at the old man, who, however, simply bowed his head again, and made no comment.

"I can't justify anything I have done; but in my letter I ventured to say a few words in extenuation," he continued. "I don't expect to soften my uncle's just resentment, but I am most anxious, Mr. Blount, my best friend on earth, to recover something, were it ever so little, of the ground I have lost in your opinion."

"Time, sir, tries all things," answered the new-comer, gently; "if you mean to lead a new life you will have opportunity to prove it."

"Was my uncle softened, ever so little, when he heard that the Conway Castle had gone down?" asked the young man, after a short silence.

"I was with him at breakfast when the morning paper brought the intelligence," said Mr. Blount. "I don't recollect that he expressed any regret."

"I dare say; I can quite suppose it; I ought to have known that he was pleased rather."

"No; I don't think he was pleased. I rather think he exhibited indifference," answered Mr. Blount.

With some grim remarks I believe the young man's uncle had received the sudden news of his death.

"Did my uncle see the letter I wrote to you, Mr. Blount?"

"No."

"And why not?"

"You will not think, I hope, that I would for any consideration use a phrase that could wound you unnecessarily when I tell you?"

"Certainly not."

"Your letter mentioned that you had lost your papers and money in the ship. Now if it should turn out that you had, in short, misstated anything——"

"Told a lie, you mean," interrupted the young man, his face growing white, and his eyes gleaming.

"It would have been discourteous in me to say so, but such was my meaning," he answered with a very kind look. "It has been one object with me during my life to reconcile courtesy with truth. I am happy in the belief that I have done so, and I

believe during a long life I have never once offended against the laws of politeness. Had you deceived him so soon again it would have sunk you finally and for ever. I thought it advisable, therefore, to give you an opportunity of reconsidering the statements of your letter before committing you by placing them before him as fact."

The young man flushed suddenly. It was his misfortune that he could not resent suspicion, however gross, although he might wince under the insult, all the more that it was just.

Rather sulkily he said:

"I can only repeat, sir, that I have not a shilling, nor a cheque; I left every paper and every farthing I possessed in my despatch-box, in my berth. Of course, I can't prove it; I can only repeat that every guinea I had in the world has gone to the bottom."

Mr. Blount raised his head. His square face and massive features confronted the younger man, and his honest brown eyes were fixed upon him with a grave and undisguised inquiry.

"I don't say that you have any certainty of recovering a place in your uncle's esteem, but the slightest prevarication in matters of this kind, would be simply suicidal. Now, I ask you, sir, on your honour, did no part of your money, or of your papers, go by rail either to Bristol or to London?"

"Upon my honour, Mr. Blount, not a farthing. I had only about ten pounds in gold, all the rest was in letters of credit and cheques; and, bad as I am, I should scarcely be fool enough to practise a trick, which, from its nature, must be almost instantaneously self-exposed. My uncle could have stopped payment of them; probably, he has done so."

"I see you understand something of business, sir."

"I should have understood a great deal more, Mr. Blount, and been a much better man, if I had listened to you long ago. I hope, in future, to be less my own adviser, and more your pupil."

To this flattering speech the old man listened attentively, but made no answer.

"Your letter followed me to Chester," said Mr. Blount, after an interval. "I received it last night. He was in London when I saw him last; and my letter, telling him that you are still living, may not reach him, possibly, for some days. Thus, you see, you would have the start of him, if I may so describe it, without rudeness; and

you are aware he has no confidence in you; and, certainly, if you will permit me to say so, he ought not to have any. I have a note of the number of the cheque; you can write a line saying that you have lost it, and requesting that payment may be stopped; and I will enclose it to Messrs. Dignum and Budget."

"There's pen and ink here; I'll do it this moment. I thought you had renounced me also; and I was going to write again to try you once more, before taking to the high road," he said, with dismal jocularity.

It wrung the pride of the young man sorely to write the note. But the bitter pill was swallowed; and he handed it, but with signs of suppressed anger, to Mr. Blount.

"That will answer perfectly," said the clumsy man in black.

"It enables you to stop that cheque by this post, without first seeing my uncle; and it relieves you," said the young man, with bitter and pitiless irony, "of the folly of acting in the most trifling matter upon my word of honour. It is certainly making the most of the situation. I have made one great slip—a crime, if you like——"

"Quite so, sir," acquiesced Mr. Blount, with melancholy politeness.

"Under great momentary temptation," continued the young man, "and without an idea of ultimately injuring any human being to the amount of a single farthing. I'm disowned; any one that pleases may safely spit in my face. I'm quite aware how I stand in this infernal pharisaical world."

Mr. Blount looked at him, gravely, but made him no answer. The young gentleman did not want to quarrel with Mr. Blount just then. He could not afford it.

"I don't mean you, of course," he said; "you have been always only too much my friend. I am speaking of the world; you know, quite well, if this unlucky thing takes wind, and my uncle's conduct toward me is the very thing to set people talking and inquiring, I may as well take off my hat to you all, drink your healths in a glass of prussic acid, and try how a trip to some other world agrees with me."

"You are speaking, of course, sir, in jest," said Mr. Blount, with some disgust in his grave countenance; "but I may mention that the unfortunate occurrence is known but to your uncle and to me, and to no other person on earth. You bear the name of Marston—you'll excuse me for reminding you, sir—and upon that point he is sensitive and imperious. He

considered, sir, that your bearing that name, if I may so say, without being supposed guilty of a rudeness, would slur it; and, therefore, you'll change it, as arranged, on embarking at Southampton. It would be highly inexpedient to annoy your uncle by any inadvertence upon this point. Your contemplating suicide would be—you will pardon the phrase—cowardly and impious. Not, indeed, if I may so say consistently with the rules of politeness," he added, thoughtfully, "that your sudden removal would involve any loss to anybody, except, possibly, some few Jews, and people of that kind."

"Certainly—of course. You need not insist upon that! I feel my degradation, I hope, sufficiently. It is not his fault, at least, if I don't."

"And, from myself, I suggest that he will be incensed, if he learns that you are accepting the hospitality of Mr. Ware's house. I think, sir, that men of the world, especially gentlemen, will regard it, if the phrase be not discourteous, in the light of a shabby act."

"Shabby, sir! what do you mean by shabby?" said Mr. Marston, flaming up.

"I mean, sir—you'll excuse me—paltry; don't you see?—or mean. His feelings would be strongly excited by your partaking of Mr. Ware's hospitality."

"Hospitality! Shelter, you mean; slates, walls—little more than they give a beast in a pound! Why, I don't owe them a crust, or a cup of tea. I get everything from the hotel, there, at Cardyllion; and Mr. Ware is a thousand miles away!"

"I speak of it simply as a question of expediency, sir. He will be inflamed against you, if he hears you have, in ever so small a matter, placed yourself under an obligation to Mr. Ware."

"But he need not hear of it; why should you mention it?"

"I cannot practise reserve with a man who treats me with unlimited confidence," he answered, gently. "Why should you not go to the hotel?"

"I have no money."

"But you get everything you want there on credit?"

"Well, yes, that's true; but it would scarcely do to make that move; I have been as ill as ever I was in my life since that awful night on the rocks down there. You can have no idea what it was; and the doctor says I must keep quiet. It isn't worth while moving now; so soon as I have funds, I'll leave this."

"I will lend you what you require, with much pleasure, sir," proffered Mr. Blount.

"Well, thanks, it is not very much, and it's hard to refuse; one feels such a fool without a shilling to give to a messenger, or to the servants; I haven't even a fee for the doctor who has been attending me.

Determined by this pathetic appeal, Mr. Blount took a bank-note of ten pounds from his purse, and lent it to Mr. Marston.

"And, I suppose, you'll remove forthwith to the hotel," he said.

"The moment I feel equal to it," he replied. "Why, d—— it, don't you think I'm ready to go, when I'm able? I—I—— Don't mind me, pray. Your looks reprove me. I'm shocked at myself when I use those phrases. I know very well that I have just escaped by a miracle from death. I feel how utterly unfit I was to die; and, I assure you, I'm not ungrateful. You shall see that my whole future life will be the better for it. I'm not the graceless wretch I have been. One such hour as preceded my scaling that rock out there is a lesson for a life. You have often spoken to me on the subjects that ought to interest us all. I mean when I was a boy. Your words have returned upon me. You derive happiness from the good you do others. I thought you had cast your bread upon the waters to see it no more; but you have found it at last. I am very grateful to you."

Did Mr. Marston believe that good people are open, in the matter of their apostleship, to flattery, as baser mortals are in matters of another sort? It was to be hoped that Mr. Marston felt half what he uttered. His words, however, did produce a favourable and a pleasant impression upon Mr. Blount.

His large face beamed for a moment with honest gratification. His eyes looked full upon him as if the benevolence of his inmost heart spoke out through them.

"If anything can possibly please him, sir, in connexion with you," said Mr. Blount, with all his customary suavity and unconscious bluntness, "it will be to learn that recent events have produced a salutary impression and a total change in you. Not that I suppose he cares very much; but I'm glad to have to represent to him anything favourable in this particular case. I mean to return to London direct, and if your uncle is still there you shall hear in a day or two—at all events very soon; but I wish you were in the hotel."

"Well, I'll go to the hotel if they can put me up. I'll go at once; address to

me to the post-office—Richard Marston, I suppose?"

"Just so, sir, Richard Marston."

Mr. Blount had risen, and stood gravely, prepared to take his leave.

"I have kept you a long time, Mr. Blount; will you take anything?"

Mr. Blount declined refreshments.

"I must leave you now, sir; there is a crisis in every life. What has happened you is stupendous; the danger and the deliverance. That hour is past. May its remembrance be with you ever—day and night. Do not suppose that it can rest in your mind without positive consequences. It must leave you a great deal better or a great deal worse. Farewell, sir."

So they parted.

Mr. Marston seemed to have lost all his spirits and half his energy in that interview. He sat motionless in the chair, into which he had thrown himself, and gazed listlessly on the floor in a sulky reverie. At length he said:

"That is a most unpleasant old fellow; I wish he was not so unscrupulously addicted to telling truth."

CHAPTER XVIII. IDENTIFIED.

It was a gloomy day; I had left Laura Grey in the room we usually occupied, where she was now alone, busy over some of our accounts. I dare say her thoughts now and then wandered into speculations respecting the identity of the visitor who the night before evaded her recognition, if indeed he was recognisable by her at all.

Her doubts were now resolved. The room door opened, and the tenant of the steward's house entered coolly, and approached the table where she was sitting.

Laura Grey did not rise; she did not speak; she sat, pen in hand, staring at him as if she were on the point of fainting.

The star-shaped scar on his forehead, fixed there by some old fracture, and his stern and energetic features, were now distinctly before her.

He kept his eye fixed upon her, and smiled, dubious of his reception.

"I saw you, Miss Grey, yesterday afternoon, though you did not see me. I avoided your eye then; but it was idle supposing that I could continue even a few days longer in this place without your seeing me. I came last night with my mind made up to reveal myself, but I put it off till we should be to ourselves, as we now are. I saw you half guessed me, but you weren't sure, and I left you in doubt."

He approached till his hands rested upon the table opposite, and said, with a very stern and eager face :

"Miss Grey, upon my honour, upon my soul, if I can give you an assurance which can bind a gentleman, I entreat you to believe me. I shan't offer one syllable contrary to what I now feel to be your wishes. I shan't press you, I shan't ask you to hear me upon the one subject you say you object to. You allege that I have done you a wrong. I will spare no pains to redress it. I will do my utmost in any way you please to dictate. I will do all this, I swear by everything a gentleman holds most sacred, upon one very easy condition."

He paused. He was leaning forward, his dark eyes were fixed upon her with a piercing gaze.

She did not, or could not, speak. She was answering his gaze with a stare wilder and darker, but her very lips were white.

"I know I have stood in your way; I admit I have injured you, not by accident; it was with the design and wish to injure you, if the endeavour to detach a fellow like that be an injury. You shall forgive me; the most revengeful woman can forgive a man the extravagances of his jealousy. I am here to renounce all, to retrieve everything. I admit the injury; it shall be repaired."

She spoke now for the first time, and said hardly above her breath :

"It's irreparable. It can't be undone—quite irreparable."

"When I undertake a thing I do it; I'll do this at any sacrifice—yes, at any, of pride or opinion. Suppose I go to the persons in question, and tell them that they have been deceived, and that I deceived them, and now confess the whole thing a tissue of lies?"

"You'll never do that."

"By Heavens, as I stand here, I'll do it. Do you suppose I care for their opinion in comparison with a real object? I'll do it. I'll write and sign it, in your presence; you shall have it to lock up in that desk, and do what you please with it, upon one condition."

A smile of incredulity lighted Laura Grey's face faintly, as she shook her head.

"You don't believe me, but you shall. Tell me what will satisfy you—what practicable proof will convince you. I'll set you right with them. You believe in a Providence. Do you think I was saved from that wreck for nothing?"

Laura Grey looked down upon her desk;

his fierce eyes were fixed on her with intense eagerness, for he thought he read in her pale face and her attitude signs of compliance. It needed, he fancied, perhaps but a slight impulse to determine her.

"I'll do it all; but, as I told you, on one condition."

There was a silence for a time. He was still watching her intently.

"Let us both be reasonable," he resumed. "I ought, I now know, to have seen long ago, Miss Grey, that there was no use in my talking to you as I did. I have been mad. There's the whole story; and now I renounce it all. I despair; it's over. I'll give you the very best proof of that. I shall devote myself to another, and you shall aid me. Pray, not a word, till you have heard me out; that's the condition. If you accept it, well. If not, so sure as there is life in me, you may regret it."

"There's nothing more you can do I care for now," she broke out with a look of agony. "Oh, Heaven help me!"

"You'll find there is," he continued, with a quiet laugh. "You can talk as long as you please when your turn comes. Just hear me out. I only want you to have the whole case before you. I say you can help me, and you shall. I'm a very good fellow to work with, and a bitter one to work against. Now, one moment. I have made the acquaintance of a young lady whom I wish to marry. Upon my sacred honour, I have no other intention. She is poor; her father is over head and ears in debt; she can never have a guinea more than two thousand pounds. It can't be sordid, you'll allow. There is a Jesuit fellow hanging about this place. He hates me; he has been in here telling lies of me. I expect you to prevent my being prejudiced by that slanderer. You can influence the young lady in my favour, and enable me to improve our acquaintance. I expect you to do so. These are my conditions. She is Miss Ethel Ware."

The shock of a disclosure so entirely unexpected, and the sting possibly of wounded vanity, made her reply more spirited than it would have been. She stood up, and said, quietly and coldly :

"I have neither right nor power in the matter; and if I had, nothing on earth could induce me to exercise them in your favour. You can write, if you please, to Mr. Ware for leave to pay your addresses to his daughter. But without his leave you shall not visit here, nor join her in her walks;

and if you attempt to do either I will remove Miss Ware, and place her under the care of some one better able than I to protect her."

The young man looked at her with a very pale face.

"I thought you knew me better, Miss Grey," he said, with an angry sneer. "You refuse your chance of reconciliation."

He paused as if to allow her time to think better of it.

"Very well; I'm glad I've found you out. Don't you think your situation is rather an odd one—a governess in Mr. Ware's country quarters? We all know pretty well what sort of gentleman Mr. Ware is, a gentleman particularly well qualified by good taste and high spirits to make his house agreeable. He was here, I understand, for about a week a little time ago, but his wife does not trouble your solitude much; and now that he is on his travels he is succeeded by a young friar. I happen to know what sort of person Carmel was, and is. Was ever young lady so fortunate? One only wonders that Mr. Ware, under these circumstances, is not a little alarmed for the Protestantism of his governess. I should scarcely have believed that you had found so easily so desirable a home; but fate has ordained that I should light upon your retreat, and hear with my own ears the good report of the neighbours, and see with my own eyes how very comfortable and how extremely happy you are."

He smiled and bowed ironically, and drew towards the door.

"There was nothing to prevent our being on the friendliest terms—nothing."

He paused, but she made him no answer.

"No reason on earth why we should not. You could have done me a very trifling kindness. I could have served you vitally."

Another pause here.

"I can ascribe your folly to nothing but the most insensate malice. I shall take care of myself. You ought to know me. Whatever befalls, you have to thank but your own infatuated obstinacy for it."

"I have friends still," she cried, in a sudden burst of agony. "Your cowardice, your threats, and insults, your persecution of a creature quite defenceless and heart-broken, and with no one near to help her——"

Her voice faltered.

"Find out your friends, if you have got them; tell them what you please; and, if

it is worth while, I will contradict your story. I'll fight your friends. I'll pit my oath against yours."

There was no sneer on his features now, no irony in his tones; he was speaking with the bitter vehemence of undisguised fury.

"I shrink from nothing. Things have happened since to make me more reckless, and by so much the more dangerous. If you knew a little more you would scarcely dare to quarrel with me." He dashed his hand as he spoke upon the table.

"I am afraid—I'm frightened; but nothing on earth shall make me do what you ask."

"That's enough—that closes it," said he. There was a little pause. "And remember, the consequences I promise are a great deal nearer than you probably dream of."

With these words, spoken slowly, with studied meaning, he left the room as suddenly as he had appeared.

Laura Grey was trembling. Her thoughts were not very clear. She was shocked, and even terrified.

The sea, which had swallowed all the rest, had sent up that one wicked man alive. How many good, kind, and useful lives were lost to earth, she thought, in those dreadful moments, and that one life, barren of all good, profligate and cruel, singled out alone for mercy!

THE BATH OF BEAUTY.

"THERE is a whole family of stories widely diffused over Europe, which agree with each other in this particular, that some adventurous mortal encounters a beautiful lady, who occasionally wears the shape of a bird, but becomes human when she indulges in a bath. While she is bathing he possesses himself of her garments, and she is forced to retain her human form. She then becomes his wife, but deserts him when the lost garments are recovered." Thus spake Laurence.

"The bird is commonly a swan," said Edgar, "and I have heard my father talk of an old Christmas pantomime, called Harlequin and the Swans, or the Bath of Beauty, the title of which seems to indicate that one of these stories formed the subject of the introduction."

"A German story, which is to be seen in Grimm's collection, and one of Mr. Dasent's Norse Tales, belong to that family," re-

sumed Laurence; "but the version which has most recently come to my knowledge is to be found in Mr. Ralston's Songs of the Russian People. In this a thirsty king ventures to drink the cool waters of a lake, and thus so deeply offends the Tsar Morskoi, or sea-king, that that awful sovereign seizes him by the beard, and will not release him till he promises to give up his infant son Ivan as a ransom. The prince, when grown to manhood, is left by his father on the edge of the lake, but, acting under the advice of a sorceress, hides among the bushes on the shore, and waits till twelve pigeons arrive, which, on reaching the ground, become so many fair maidens. These, disrobing, plunge into the lake, and are presently joined by a thirteenth pigeon, who follows their example. Her dress is seized by Ivan, and she is forced to remain behind, when the others, resuming their feathers, have flown away. When Ivan appears she gives him a golden ring, tells him that she is Vassilissa the Wise, daughter of the Tsar Morskoi, and shows him the way to her abode beneath the waters, where he finds a pleasant land, abounding in green fields and groves, and well warmed by the sun. The king, at first angry, is satisfied when Ivan has performed several difficult tasks, and the prince ultimately becomes the husband of Vassilissa."

"A similar story, likewise Russian," said Edgar, "was brought by Doctor Bertram, a well-known German collector of legends, from the borders of Lake Ladoga. In this, however, the personages belong to a more humble station. The young gentleman is the son of a poor peasant, and the lady is the daughter, not of a stately potentate, like the Tsar Morskoi, but of a Vodanoy, or water-sprite. These points of difference are unimportant, but the circumstance is noteworthy that the pigeons, including the last, are only twelve in number."

"Ah," said Laurence, "thirteen, though it is a number deeply impressed on the minds of superstitious people who give dinner-parties, seldom makes its appearance in popular narratives."

"No," observed Edgar, looking very profound, "the mystical numbers are three, seven, and twelve, and when any other number takes the place of one of these in a fairy tale, I strongly suspect that something must have dropped out."

"I heartily share your feeling in this respect," observed Maximilian, "and I thoroughly sympathise with those editors of Horace, who having ascertained that

the number of lines in the poet's odes, even when these do not fall into what we should call stanzas, like the Sapphics and Alcaics, is generally divisible by four, surmise a loss when this condition is apparently disregarded. A note to the eighth ode of the fourth book, in the little Oxford edition of Horace, will fully illustrate my meaning."

"There seems to be a natural predilection for symmetry in the human mind, however uncultivated it may be," said Edgar.

"You don't call Horace uncultivated, do you?" sneered Laurence.

"Of course not," replied Edgar, somewhat warmly. "I referred to the compilers or propagators of fairy lore."

"How about the originators?" asked Laurence.

"Psha," returned Edgar, sulkily. "Of those, you are well aware, we know nothing."

"Do not let us grow unnecessarily disputations," interposed Maximilian. "Thanks to Laura Gonzenbach, I think I can give you a Sicilian tale, belonging to the family of which you spoke, and more than usually elaborate."

Laurence and Edgar composed their faces.

"Joseph, the only son of a poor farmer," began Maximilian, "one day requested his mother to give him his clothes and her blessing, that he might set off and earn a livelihood. His parents did not like to part with him, but, as he had reason on his side, he soon quieted their objections, and departed with his clothes in a knapsack, and a fair provision of bread and onions. When he had travelled some distance, and had sat down behind a door to refresh himself, a gallant gentleman on horseback stopped to inquire who he was, and hearing that he was in search of a livelihood, engaged him as a servant. The delighted Joseph followed his master till they came to a magnificent castle filled with treasures of every kind. This was the residence of his master, who gave him a fine suit of clothes, and told him he might take as much money as he wanted, and enjoy himself to his heart's content, but added that once a year he must do him an important service."

"Even now," observed Laurence, "the story deviates a little from the beaten track."

"When nearly a year had passed," continued Maximilian, "Joseph felt a desire to visit his parents, and having received

the reluctant permission of his master so to do, returned to his native village, glorious in his gay attire. Not only did the people in the street fail to recognise him, but even his parents took him for some noble stranger, until he explained to them that he was the veritable Joseph. After he had made them acquainted with his good fortune, and given them money enough to render them comfortable for the rest of their lives, he took his departure, and went back to his master."

"It is lucky he has no brothers," exclaimed Edgar. "If he had, that visit would bring him into trouble."

"Not long afterwards," proceeded Maximilian, "he was told by his master that the time had arrived when he was to do the required service."

"He had hitherto done nothing at all," remarked Edgar. "I'm afraid something unpleasant is coming."

"In compliance with his master's orders," said Maximilian, "he put on a hunting suit, and he and his master both left the castle on horseback, Joseph leading by the bridle a third horse, laden with empty sacks. After awhile they came to a high mountain, so steep that it could not be ascended even on foot, and alighting from their horses, refreshed them with food and water. Joseph's master then told him to kill the third horse, strip off its skin, and when this had been dried in the sun, he gave him a sharp knife, informing him that he must now be sewn up in the horse's hide, together with the empty sacks, and thus remain till the ravens came and carried him to the top of the mountain. When he was safely landed, he was to cut open the hide with his knife, and await further commands. All this was done, and Joseph having reached the summit of the mountain with the aid of the ravens, and having extricated himself with his knife, perceived that the whole mountain was covered with diamonds. His master from below ordered him to fill all the empty sacks with precious stones, and fling them down. The order was punctually obeyed; but when Joseph asked what he was to do next, his master laughingly bade him farewell, desired him to get down in the best manner he could, and trotted off, the horse which had brought Joseph being now loaded with the diamonds."

"Sinbad in the Valley of Diamonds!" cried Laurence; "save that instead of a valley we have a mountain."

"Nay, not only Sinbad," ejaculated Edgar. "The shabby manner in which Joseph is treated by his master exactly corresponds to the trick played upon Aladdin by the magician. Wander as we will over the broad world of fairy lore, we are sure to arrive at some familiar land."

"True," assented Laurence, "and we have not reached the Bath of Beauty yet."

"Stamping with rage," proceeded Maximilian, "Joseph now observed that he had stamped on something hollow; and bending down, perceived that he was standing on a wooden trap-door. This he opened, and descending a flight of steps, came to a brightly illuminated hall. While he was looking round in wonder, a door opened, and in walked a giant, who gruffly asked what he wanted. Joseph, dissembling his fears, pretended to recognise the giant as his uncle, and said he was very glad to see him."

"Of course he was not the giant's nephew," interrupted Edgar; "and of course the giant, with that credulity consequent upon large bones, believed him without further inquiry?"

"Of course," replied Maximilian. "The giant was not only satisfied, but took Joseph into his service, which proved very light and pleasant. However, Joseph had not been long in his new place before he observed that, at a certain hour every day, his master was afflicted by a violent pain, and affectionately asked the cause of this inconvenience, promising to do his best to find a remedy. The giant thanked him for his good intentions, and told him that four fairies were accustomed to bathe daily in a pond in his garden, and that, while they remained in the water, his pain continued. Joseph could, however, put an end to this state of things if he would watch the bathers from a hiding-place, and possess himself of the garment put off by their chief, the Capo-fata, or head fairy. Joseph acted accordingly, and the bereaved fairy, not being able to depart, was laid in chains by the giant, who brought her every morning a modicum of bread and water, and told her that he would not set her free till she consented to marry his nephew. The Capo-fata was not to be starved into compliance, so the giant set before her a lighted lamp, and told her that while the oil in it lasted, her life would last also, but no longer. So very pressing a suit was not to be rejected; so the fairy gave her consent, a grand wedding-feast was held, and Joseph was very happy."

"Let us hope that his felicity was of

long duration," said Edgar. "His courtship was not very promising."

"It strikes me," observed Laurence, "that the giant's harsh treatment of the fairy is to prepare us for the flight of the wife, which we find in the German story of the Swan, and of which we find no trace in the Russian tale of Ivan and Vassilissa."

"It is worthy of note," remarked Edgar, "that in this Sicilian story the bride does not wear a form other than human. But go on, unless the story is at an end."

"You will be pleased or otherwise to hear that there is plenty more to come," returned Maximilian. "On the day after the wedding, the giant, in the most friendly spirit, dismissed Joseph from his service, desired him to return with his young wife to his parents, and gave him the purloined dress, with the injunction that he was not to part with it till some one produced a golden snuff-box exactly resembling one which he had placed in his hands."

"This apparently trifling detail," shrieked Edgar, with delight, "is pregnant with instruction, showing, as it does, how largely popular tales share the nature of a rolling snow-ball. The tale can only have its origin in the darkest of mythical periods, yet here we have an incident which brings down its date to some time after the discovery of tobacco. On the strength of it, I shall now light a cigar."

"Joseph received from the giant, not only a snuff-box, but a magic rod," proceeded Maximilian, "which he found extremely useful. On the way homewards he and his wife began to feel tired, but a mere wish, by virtue of the rod, brought them to their journey's end. Before dropping in upon his parents, Joseph boldly wished for a palace, a coach and horses, a retinue of servants, and much costly raiment, and the wish having been granted, he presented himself to his delighted father and mother, and invited them to live with him. Everybody was now happy, with the exception of Joseph's wife, who missed her faëry friends, and was constantly thinking how she could become possessed of the golden snuff-box, which would restore her to liberty."

"How did she know the secret of the box?" asked Edgar. "Did she learn it from the stupid giant?"

"That I cannot say," replied Maximilian. "At any rate the value of the box was fully appreciated by Joseph, who always carried it in his pocket, though he confided the dress to the care of his mother, to

whom he repeated the injunction of the giant. Well, one evening, at a great ball in Joseph's palace, a gentleman asked the fair hostess to be his partner in a dance, and she said she would comply with his request if—if—if he would contrive to possess himself of her husband's box. The condition was fulfilled."

"That is to say, the gentleman picked Joseph's pocket in the ball-room," interposed Edgar. "It seems we have a mythical prototype of George Barrington."

"No sooner was Joseph's wife possessed of the box," proceeded Maximilian, "than she told her maid to take it to her mother-in-law, and exchange it for the dress. The poor old lady, thinking that she only followed her son's instructions, readily gave up the desired article. The wife at once put it on and vanished. Likewise vanished the palace and all its appurtenances, and Joseph found himself sitting on a stone by the road-side, dressed in the humble attire of former days."

"I note a defect here," observed Edgar. "The palace that comes and goes corresponds to the palace of Aladdin, and the magic rod to the wonderful lamp. We have not heard that Joseph was deprived of that rod, nor have we any reason to suppose that its virtue was affected by the departure of Joseph's wife. That she should go away is natural enough; but why should the palace go too?"

"I appreciate your objection, entirely," said Maximilian. "The rod having answered its purpose, seems to have been forgotten altogether, and Joseph's prosperity is unaccountably connected with his wife's dress. However, let us proceed. Joseph once more took leave of his parents, and setting out anew to seek a livelihood, came to the very spot where he had been found by his first employer, who, not recognising him, took him again into his service, and entertained him as before for a year. Of course, the old joke was repeated; but Joseph, when he had been carried by the ravens to the summit of the mountain, pelted his master with stones, instead of filling the sacks with diamonds. When he had put him to flight, he opened the trap-door, and called upon his excellent friend the giant, to whom he narrated his misfortune, and declared his determination to recover his lost wife. The giant thought the case hopeless, since another giant had captured the flighty fair one, but he showed him the road that would lead to the desired end, and gave him a piece of bread. With

this he refreshed himself, after he had proceeded some distance, and observing that a number of ants were attracted by the crumbs he had let fall, threw down to them a large share of his provisions. As a mark of gratitude, the king of the ants presented him with an ant's leg, the value of which he did not perceive, but which he wrapped in paper, and put into his pocket, that the king might not deem him discourteous. A little further on, finding an eagle nailed alive to a tree by an arrow, he rescued it, and received a feather from its wing as a recompense. In like manner a lion, from whose foot he extracted a thorn, rewarded him with a hair of his beard. At last feeling tired, he thought he would test the virtue of his gifts, and taking out the eagle's feather, he exclaimed, 'I am a Christian, and will become an eagle'—in the Sicilian dialect, 'Cristianu sugnu e' acula diventu.' At once the desired transformation was effected, and flying through the air in the shape of an eagle, he arrived at the palace where his wife was confined. The expressed wish that he desired once more to be a Christian sufficed to restore him to human shape, which, by virtue of the tiny leg, he soon exchanged for that of an ant, and thus entered the palace through a chink in one of the walls. Here, in a large hall, he discovered his wife, and many other fairies, all laden with heavy chains. The poor creature was delighted to see him, when he had resumed his natural shape, but her hopes that Joseph would be able to rescue her were of the faintest. In the first place he would have to kill a dragon with seven heads, and split open the seventh, whence would emerge a raven. Out of the body of the raven an egg was to be cut, which, if thrown so as to hit the giant in the middle of the forehead, would immediately kill him."

"Stop a moment," cried Laurence, "and let me remark that this part of the story has a very Slavonic appearance. Mr. Ralston tells us of a certain Koschkir who is supposed to be an impersonation of Winter, and who is killed by the breaking of an egg, which is found in a duck, which is found in a hare, which is found in a casket, which is found under an oak."

"The intrusion of the giant," continued Maximilian, "put a stop to conversation; so Joseph, creeping out of the palace in the shape of an ant, flew in the shape of an eagle to the foot of the mountain where the dragon resided. Here, after he had resumed his human form, he found a shep-

herd, who complained bitterly of the ruthless fashion in which the dragon ravaged his flock. Joseph promised to remove the annoyance if the shepherd would intrust him with four sheep, and these being reluctantly yielded, he went with them up the mountain, where the scent of the dainty animals soon brought out the dragon. By virtue of the lion's hair, Joseph changed himself into a lion, and after a tough contest succeeded in biting off two of the dragon's seven heads. Both parties being fairly tired out, the combat was adjourned till the day following; and highly was the shepherd delighted to see Joseph reappear with the four sheep. On the next day Joseph took with him eight sheep, and the shepherd, desirous to see the sport, followed him unseen. The struggle was now more desperate than ever, and when Joseph, as a lion, had bitten off the dragon's sixth head, he was so exhausted that the shepherd felt bound to regale him with some wine and bread. Thus fortified he bit off the seventh head, which, in human form, he split open. As an eagle he captured and killed the raven that issued from the head; as a man he cut out the egg; as an ant he entered the giant's palace; and as a man killed the giant by hitting him with the egg in the middle of the forehead. The captive fairies were all released, and Joseph and his wife, returning home with the deceased giant's treasures, built another palace much better than the first, and lived happily ever afterwards."

"Here," said Laurence, "we clearly have two stories. The good offices rendered by the grateful animals point to a group of tales which is quite distinct from that in which bathing fairies are conspicuous. It is represented by the story of the Faithful Animals in Grimm's collection, and in more courtly form by the Countess d'Aulnoy's Fair One with Golden Locks."

"Two stories!" ejaculated Edgar; "only two! It seems to me that Max has been telling us nearly all the fairy tales in the world rolled into one."

SONG OF THE RAIN IN SKYE.

BY A DAMP TOURIST.

COME tourists and forget awhile
Your shops, your tills, your Cockers,*
Come in your plaids, or in your kilts,
Or in your knickerbockers!
Come to the pleasant Isle of Skye,
To Mountain, Loch, and River,
And you shall find that I, the Rain,
Will rain on you for ever.

* Two and two are four.—COCKER.

If you are bound for high Quiraing,
 Be sure I shall be ready,
 To wet and drench you to the skin,
 With down-pour strong and steady.
 Through the dark curtain of the clouds
 I'll ooze, and drip, and shiver,
 And rain, and rain, and rain, and rain,
 And drizzle on for ever.

If Scavaig and Coruik have charms,
 Or high Cuchullins hoary,
 My wandering mists shall rise between,
 Behind ye, and before ye,
 And from their bosoms shall descend
 Like arrows from a quiver,
 The sleety shower—the showery sleet,
 For ever and for ever.

For I'm the monarch of the clime,
 The "misty, moisty" Skye-land,
 Lord of the Storr, the Crag, the Ben,
 The lowland and the highland.
 And over all I reign supreme,
 And fill each loch and river,
 And all who dare invade my realm
 Shall find I'll rain for ever!

THE CUPBOARD PAPERS.

V. MADAME BARBIZON'S DINNER.

HENRI reflected in a Tyrolean market-place, when an Italian fruit-woman, against whom he hustled, responded with a shower of figs—"it matters very little how a friendship is begun, provided it is made." It matters little how we get at our subject, provided we reach it, and get a firm grip of it. It matters not how I happened to be asked suddenly to dine with Madame Barbizon, who dwells in the Cité du Couchant, by the Boulevard Rochecouart, where the lamps are still slung across the street as in the good old days. It is one of the picturesque old quarters Monsieur Haussmann has left; and it is packed with unfashionable, thrifty, sagacious people, who sally forth from it respectably dressed, on inconceivably small incomes. You see old men crawling up to their quarters, with their day's provisions in a little basket. A veteran, possibly of the Grande Armée, stops a marchand des quatre saisons, to buy a bouncing tomato for one sou. Menagères, in their caps of snow, crowd round a stall of artichokes. The rôtiisseur of the neighbourhood does a roaring business, as will be presently seen. A lady of dignified mien has a penny roll in her hand. A man of solemn aspect is not ashamed to be bearer of a tin of potage, and the complementary materials of a dainty repast lie in the recesses of his pockets. It is the quarter of the penny-worths; the buyers being light-hearted bearers of light purses, who, when forced to the attics by evil Fortune, only turn upon her and tell

her she has perched them nearer the orchestra of the larks.

The Cité is a wonderful place—a long yard full of chickens and children. Opposite Madame Barbizon's is a carpenter's shop of fantastic build, and near it the inevitable wine-shop, where, on the very flimsiest pretext, Hector of the saw is ever ready to take a glass with a friend. What would Mrs. Boltt say to this court, with its rattling laughter, shrill songs, cock-crowing, screams of children, hammering and sawing? Would even Boltt persuade her that respectable people dwell in the houses from which the oil-lamp is suspended? Mr. Boltt would probably dismiss it as a cut-throat lane; but if he could be brought to regard it as a place where prudent, cultivated people, of the smallest means, dwell in comfort, would even his eloquence and fame bring Mrs. Boltt to tolerate it for a moment?

I think not. I believe that no argument would induce her and her co-genteel people of Chalkstone to regard my dinner with Madame Barbizon, and the manner of getting it together, as anything less than shocking in each and every particular.

Madame Barbizon is the widow of an officer, accomplished, and accustomed to the society of the ceremonious old régime. Circumstances have driven her to the Cité du Couchant; that is, her fortune has dwindled to a pension of some thirty-five pounds a year, and a little money which she earns from the music publishers. She may have seventy pounds a year—all told. Is she cast down, and does she fret her heart away, thinking of the prosperous days that are no more? I never saw a merrier martyr. Never did evil Fortune meet a more defiant look. The first reason is, that she is not ashamed of being poor; because she has not the least idea that she has lost caste by losing money. She receives in her little cupboard of a salon, with all the ease and dignity of her by-gone days. Many friends have fallen away from her; and she tells you gaily that she has put a cross against their names, and will think of them no more. It is conscious virtue and cold mutton with her; only, being a Frenchwoman, she finds fifty forms for the mutton. Madame Barbizon has a dining-room, a salon, a bedroom, antechamber, and kitchen, all of the smallest proportions. It is a doll's home. You might put it all into a good British nursery. But it is the prettiest toy in the world, with here and there remnants of the ancient

glories of the Barbizons. Madame has no servant, only a woman who comes in the morning for an hour to do the rough work. You ring, and madame opens the door. Were she mistress of the robes, she could not have more dignity. At the same time, were she twenty, and tripping upon flowers, she could not be livelier.

She is frank as to her narrow means, but only for a laugh over her generalship in defeating poverty.

"In short," she said to me one afternoon when we had discussed the difficulties of life in these dear days, "you shall dine with me to-day."

"To-day," I cried; "but do remember, madame, it is nearly six, and I should disturb your arrangements. Your dinner must be nearly ready; no, no, another day, if you will permit me the honour."

She laid her hand upon my arm, and answered:

"To-day it shall be, since you are not engaged. There is some soup on the fire—you like oseille soup? If so, I think I shall please you. But don't be afraid of a little trouble. I must go out."

"We will go together," I suggested.

"Of course. I shall want you; and you will learn how the lonely woman lives. To begin with, you see I carry a basket; but admit that is *bien distingué*."

A white napkin was folded within it.

"Ha! the bottle!" said madame, as we were leaving. We entered the Cité, carrying the basket *bien distingué*, and the black litre bottle, which we left at the wine-shop, with directions that a full bottle should be sent up to madame's. The return of the bottle was a saving of three sous; the price of the litre of wine was sixteen sous. We now made direct for the *rôtisseur's*. It has been observed by a profound gourmet that a man must be born a *rôtisseur*; it is a gift, not an acquirement. And surely the performer in the Rue Lepic, before the twelve feet of fire, was born to his vocation. Two or three horizontal spits were turning under his generalship, bearing fowls, turkeys, and geese by the dozen, to say nothing of some half-dozen joints. The scene was a diverting one. A large, dark room, half given to the exhibition of the uncooked poultry and meat; the other half to the vast fire and spits, and to the crowded counter, where a buxom woman was selling the succulent viands, and birds hissing hot. The *rôtisseur* was also ready to enter into negotiations for any of the birds on his spits. Madame Barbizon,

making her way through the crowd, asked monsieur the value of one of the poulets that were turning and crackling before the scorching fire. She pointed to her choice with her umbrella, whereupon the *rôtisseur* fell into an attitude, and observed that he could not possibly let it go under three francs and a half. Madame Barbizon found that this would not be an advantageous investment, and tried hard to obtain another bird on the spit. "That," exclaimed the *rôtisseur*, "I paid three francs fifteen sous for in the market. I can't let it go under four francs. The other, for which I ask three francs and a half, cost me three francs five sous."

While the debate was proceeding, in the hurly-burly of the crowded shop one of madame's neighbours was heard to agree that he (he was a well-dressed gentleman) would take half of a superb smoking goose that lay upon the counter. Madame turned sharply round, and her practised eye fell upon the noble bird.

"You take half?" she said, addressing herself composedly to the gentleman, while the shopwoman, in white sleeves and bib, was preparing to halve the goose. "And at what price, monsieur?"

"At three francs and a half, madame," was the reply, made as deferentially as though madame were in the salon of an ambassadress.

After a brief consultation it was agreed that there was no better bargain before us; the bird was halved, and in a few minutes half of the goose was rolled in the white napkin and deposited in the basket *bien distingué*; and we left just as a little lady in black silk, also bearing a basket, tripped in to know whether her fowl was ready.

"In a little quarter of an hour, at the utmost," quoth the *rôtisseur* with great respect, touching his white cap of office.

"Ha, the cheese!" said Madame Barbizon; and we turned back into the shop of roasts. There we entered into negotiations for the half of a Camembert cheese. Madame did her utmost to get it for seven sous, but the shopwoman stood firm at eight; and at this price it fell into the basket.

Opposite the *rôtisseur's* was the fruiterer's. It was one of those admirable shops in which fruits, salads, cheeses, butter are so artistically disposed as to tempt the most fastidious; designed, in fact, for such customers as my hostess, who are not above being bearers of their

own market-baskets. Here we bought two apples at one sou each, and three or four pears; grapes, ten sous. "Dear me!" said madame, "I was going to forget my potage;" and she asked for a quarter of a pound of butter, eight sous. We then turned to the salads, and bought a goodly variety for four sous.

"We are nearly complete," said Madame Barbizon as we tripped along the busy Rue Lepic, where scores of people of the middle class, in their Sunday clothes (it was Sunday evening) were gathering their dinners, making up their menus as they saw how the market of the day lay.

"Now I dare say, Monsieur Fin-Bec," said Madame Barbizon, looking archly up into my face, "this way of living seems very strange to you, but I am obliged to study every sou; and I can tell you I am making a grand seigneur of you. I dare say your eagle eye caught sight of a slice of galantine that lay on the buffet in my thimble of a *salle-à-manger*. You know I'm *sans façon* with you: well, if you hadn't dropped in to honour me with your company, for which I can never thank you enough, that slice of galantine and my soup, with a bit of brie mayhap, would have been your humble servant's dinner. And a very good dinner too for us women. If you have taste and discretion you can always, thank Heaven, dine, and pleasantly, for a few sous."

I observed: "Madame, you are quite right. Your galantine, your sorrel soup, with a pinch of vermicelli instead of bread if you want to be grand, some good brie, or country cream cheese smothered in white sugar for dessert, a sound, light Bordeaux, with water fresh from the spring, is a dinner a lady or gentleman may make for a trifle over a franc, any day."

"Do take care of my goose," said madame, observing that I was emphasising my remarks by jerking the distinguished basket. "If you're not good you shall not carry it a step further. But you are right; and nobody knows it better than she who has the honour of addressing you. Adversity is not such a bitter school as they say; but you must be a good pupil."

As we turned into the Cité du Couchant, loaded, madame popped her head into the vine-shop, to beg them to send her litre up at once. We had reached the first landing of our ascent, when my hostess turned upon me with a mock tragic air, and exclaimed:

"Malheureux! We have forgotten the bread."

I protested that I could run for it; but the little housewife would suffer no interference with her prerogative. We hied to the baker's together, where she selected, with a delightful gravity, the two finest rolls of the collection, and I carried them.

"They will flour your gloves a little," she said, "but you will survive that."

I was unloaded in the *salle-à-manger*, and then ushered into the salon with the injunction to be good and quiet for a quarter of an hour. Before the quarter had expired, there was a ring. Madame Barbizon called to me from the kitchen to do her the pleasure of opening the door. It would be Jules, or the wine. It was Jules, Madame Barbizon's nephew, a dandy of the new Jockey Club school, who treated me with much ceremony. Madame introduced us from the kitchen, telling Monsieur Jules to be exceedingly amiable to his uncle's old friend, and hers, Monsieur Fin-Bec.

"And, par exemple," madame called from the cuisine, "you stop to dinner. I will take no refusal; you may run away directly after, if you please. We are going to feast like princes."

Another ring at the bell.

"Mon bon Jules," cried the hostess, "I cannot leave my soup; be good enough to take the wine in."

The *gandin*, taking in the litre of small wine, was a picture. He tried his hardest to look amused and at his ease; but I believe he could have thrown the contents of the bottle in his aunt's face. He would have given a small bank-note to get away from our modest entertainment, but he dared not offend his clever and independent little relative. So he pulled off his grey gloves, and hung his shining hat in the dark cupboard, which was the *anté-chamber*, and resigned himself to sorrel soup, and our conversation.

It was a merry little dinner. Monsieur Jules was asked, with a particularly sly pleasure, to change the plates, while the conversation travelled over the scores of Mendelssohn and Rossini, and the vagaries of Wagner; and madame made some admirably judicious remarks on the contemporary authors of her own country. The cost of the entertainment was six francs sixteen sous. Nor is this all. After we had feasted to our ample satisfaction, there remained enough for Madame Barbizon's mid-day breakfast, and dinner on the morrow.

VI. MADAME AT MARKET.

ENGLAND has made her appearance in the food markets of the Continent, selling universal sweetmeats, Huntley and Palmer's biscuits, Crosse and Blackwell's pickles, Colman's mustard (I came suddenly upon it the other day at a table near the Rue Lepelletier), Allsopp and Bass, and Ind, Coope, and Company, and Chester cheese. Wandering in the strange old Rue des Rôtisseurs of Antwerp, in an ancient shop of little window panes, my eye caught a green bottle of Victoria drops. Allsopp's hand is upon one of the grandest of the corporation houses in the Grand' Place. I think it must be Urbain Dubois, by his Cuisine de Tous les Pays (in which a foreigner admits for the first time that there is something in rhubarb tart), who has let the nations of the Continent know that there are things worth tasting in the British kitchen. Bless me! there is a live turtle at this moment in Chevet's window; but the unwieldy fellow looks sadly out of place flanked with terrines, truffles, crevettes, aubergines, pines, and the succulent and odorous family of sausages and hams. He belongs to Cornhill, where the eyes of London aldermen can fall upon him. I see English pickles in the windows of Potel and Chabot; the great Potin of the Boulevard Malesherbes sells British jams, Yarmouth bloaters, various cheeses from perfidious Albion, Harvey's sauce, the delicacies of Burgess; and having partaken of these the Parisian may go to rest with Child's night-lights at his elbow, that he may be ready should a revolution happen before morning.

You see, in the matter of foods at any rate, the Parisians are a receptive people. They were the first to welcome the gelinotte from Russia. The saddle of mutton which they took from us, has been perfected to a saddle of pré-salé, of exquisite tenderness and taste; and should you, unbelieving reader, ever be passing Durand's at the luncheon hour, step in and taste one of their pré-salé mutton-chops.

But we English folk, who travel more than any other race, bring home nothing. Mr. and Mrs. Boltt have returned to Chalkstone, to order the Sunday leg of mutton at Dothem's; to have it hashed on Monday; to order a piece of beef (their enemies declare it is always the ribs) on Tuesday; to eat it cold on Wednesday; to hash it on Thursday with a little fish or some chops to make up; to have corn-beef on Friday, that will serve on Saturday, and yield some slices for Sunday's breakfast. They have

been sauntering in many markets showing new and advantageous foods, but they have not brought back a single idea with them, to vary the dull monotony, or lighten the expense, of their table. Mr. Bloomsbury Baker has made a few attempts with unvarying failure, and many denunciations of his kickshaws. Tens of thousands of British tourists sweep the face of the Continent every year, and see how the Belgians, the Swiss, the Italians, the Germans, and the French live, using fifty cheap foods unknown in England; having many smart contrivances for economic cookery, and being perfect masters in the Art d'Accommoder les Restes; and they return to the mutton-chop of the mother country; and the butcher, baker, greengrocer, fishmonger, poulterer, and milkman begin to ring again at the servants' bell, and deliver the red book of English domesticity every Monday morning. No wonder that Mr. Baker finds it very difficult indeed to bring up his five children, and live in the style he deems due to the dignity of the Bakers, on two thousand a year. If he will consent to the general idea that part of social dignity consists in having the proper number of tradesmen's carts driven to your gate every morning, he must pay for it. The carts cost money, the tradesmen must have their profit, and Baker must pay, moreover, for those who fail in their payments. Moreover, he must be content with the marketing of his purveyors. There are more fish in Billingsgate than Scales brings out of it; but he must select from Scales's selection. He must market out of Scales's marketing, and pay Scales handsomely into the bargain. Hence the food supplies of the metropolitan suburbs are dearer than those of central London, while the quality and variety are inferior. You have no local markets, and you are so genteel that Mrs. Bloomsbury Baker and Mrs. Boltt would not deign to spend half an hour every morning in them if you had. Their servants would rise in rebellion if the tradesmen did not call as usual. They would decline to form part of a household that was vulgar enough to buy for itself, let the market-basket be even more distingué than that of my friend Madame Barbizon.

Yet these ladies, trotting about on the Grande Place at Brussels, past the Maison du Roi, buying flowers under the noses of Counts Egmont and Horn, and apparently without the least shame as to the baskets on their arms, are mistresses of fashionable

homes in the Quartier Leopold, and their equipages are to be seen in the Bois de la Cambre; and Brussels is an eminently genteel little city. One will carry a fuchsia away in her arms; over the shoulders of another nods a lily. The markets of Brussels are many, and in each of them, betimes, will be found housewives of all conditions buying first-hand. It is a city, I fear, very much given to the enjoyment of the good things of this life. The streets proclaim it. The Rue au Beurre, Rue de l'Abricot, the Rue du Marché au Poulet, the Montagne aux Herbes Potagères, the Rue du Hareng, the Rue du Poivre, and, lastly, the Rue Chair et Pain—in the heart of the marketing, with the Caveau of the Grande Boucherie for one of its corners; are of the flesh, fleshy. On fête days the dainties sold on the Place de la Monnaie are eggs, cakes, and crabs. It is a little Paris; yes, but of Dutch build, warmed with Dutch bitters, and made heavy with bock, faro, bavière, and half a dozen other beers. Peep into the old beer-houses, the Nouvelle Patte de Dindon, for instance, by the Hôtel de Ville, and you will see rows of sturdy fellows putting away bricks of bread and great lumps of sausage, with the help of beer that would hum in the ears of a Parisian. Here the little restaurants advertise beefsteaks and Ostend oysters, at all hours. In the people's market on the Quai au Sel (a square of quaint surroundings that was many centuries old before the first spade was put to the foundations of the Leopold Quarters) a whole side of the market-place is given up to the beloved mussel. It is flanked by Dutch cheese depôts; manufacturers of fruit-cakes, that would not lie easily in a band-box; beer and brandy-shops; and venders of nut-brown sabots, that at a distance look like stacks of crusty loaves.

At one door men are throwing Dutch cheeses from a cart to the shop; next door they are stacking brown sabots from a hand-barrow; and at hand two burly carters in sabots are munching bread-and-cheese, clattering their beechen shoes together, and showing what admirable feet covering they make for the poor, who have to push along the muddy roads that lead from farms to market-places. And all the time (it is hardly eight in the morning) the cooks and workmen's wives, the shop-keepers and the ladies in dainty morning dress—exquisitely neat as to boot and glove—are pattering to and from the Quai au Sel, as by the Montagne-St.-Geneviève

they are pattering from the superb fruit market, or, at hand, from the Grande Boucherie. Each buyer is buying for the day only; if it be Saturday, then for that day and the next.

"But it is the variety that tempts them, sir—that is, to my mind, the dominant fact in the continental market," said Mr. Bloomsbury Baker, as we sat in the balcony of the Trois Rois, at Basel, dropping the ashes of our cigars into the Rhine. "I was first struck with it in that picturesque Heumarkt at Cologne. Bless me, there were heaps of vegetables no British housewife has ever seen in the course of her life. I dropped upon the scene past an extraordinary old house in the cathedral corner, where punch grog is to be had at one silver groschen the glass, and was at once struck with the extraordinary varieties of vegetables strange to English eyes—not to mine of course. First and foremost there was a good dozen varieties of salads; and next I remarked the immense quantities of amber-yellow mange-tout peas. The housewives were buying this excellent, nutritive vegetable by the basketful, and well they might. * With a bit of bacon, there was a dinner for a dozen; for you know, of course, friend Fin-Bec, that the pea is eaten shell and all."

"And is of fine flavour," I added. "I have endeavoured in vain to make a few English market-gardeners force it upon London markets. In the whole range of English vegetables there is not one with nutritive qualities equal to this."

"Then there was the salsifis. Why haven't we that as plentiful as parsnips I want to know? Nay, sir, why should the Germans, in their market-places, display fifty kinds of wholesome sausages, while our country markets can show only green bacon, and third-rate meat? In the Heumarkt, I stood in wonderment before the festoons of the popular sausage, and saw the poor people buying; and when I beheld the apron of the poor workwoman filled with her mange-touts and her salad, crowned with just the bit of animal substance necessary to make the daily food of her family at once toothsome and wholesome, I reflected how much better off she and hers were, than the slatternly, ignorant English workman's wife, who has double her money to spend."

I recommended Mr. Baker to preach this in the highways and byways of his country.

"It would be time lost," he answered.

"At the Bellevue they couldn't understand how I, an Englishman, could prefer a grilled trout and a lemon for my breakfast, to ham and eggs. The waiter, when I ordered the fish, assured me that theirs was English bacon, that their cold beef was as good as any to be got in England. He made a last appeal to me with cold chicken and ham before he took my order for the trout. And when, at last, the fish was brought, he laid it before me, saying, 'Monsieur is not English?' 'Bloomsbury Baker not English!' I cried. 'Why do you ask? What do you mean?' 'Monsieur will pardon me,' the fellow said, 'but all Englishmen take ham and eggs, or simply eggs, or eggs and bacon, for their breakfast. If monsieur is English, he has travelled a great deal.' Now, just think of that. Could you have a better illustration of—shall I say the pig-headedness—of my dear countrymen; and doesn't it explain thoroughly the predicament of our working population, who have just the choice of half a dozen foods to live upon?"

"Yes," I interrupted, "and who buy these after half a dozen profits have been made upon them."

Mr. Baker was in the vein, and continued to draw on his experiences.

"At that very Hôtel Bellevue, I remember two or three English tourists who received some of the dishes—as chevrenil, served with greengages, and roast beef, with cucumber—with derisive laughter; tossing their heads, and giving the servants to understand that these things might be good enough for the subjects of Kaiser Wilhelm, but were not to approach the lips of Queen Victoria's lieges. A similar manifestation happened on the Rhine boat, when the waiters handed round sirops, and ices, and fruit. Britishers must have Bass; and a sirop and fruit in the broiling sun are barbarisms beneath them. The scene at the Cologne hotel was repeated, with variations, at the table-d'hôte on the Rhine boat—at a well-served various dinner given in the saloon to between three and four hundred passengers. Nay, but you will find it everywhere, where the Bolts and their congeners carry alpenstocks and brandy-flasks. We shall never improve, sir—never. It's in the bone and marrow of us. Just think of it: people in a work-house revolting against Australian meats. Just reflect on the example of that among the poor out of doors."

Mr. Bloomsbury Baker was correct in his observation. There is abundance in

the continental market because the poorest classes understand almost every variety of food. I remember many years ago, when I travelled amid the poorest population in Paris to see how they lived, and went to the Nouvelle Californie by the Barrière Mont Parnasse; I found the chiffoniers at dinner at long black benches, with their soup and dishes before them, that showed their knowledge of the varieties of the cuisine. Their dinner of soup, or meat and vegetables, would cost them five sous, and they would, have a sou cup of coffee and a sou chasse-café at the coffee-stalls outside. By the market-place of Brussels there is the humble restaurant of the Grand Laboureur, where for one shilling you may have a soup, three dishes, and a dessert. I want the reader to observe that the significant part of this fact lies in the form of the dinner. It shows that the humblest diners require soup, meat, vegetables, salad, and dessert; and that these are the divisions of the poorest meals. The component parts of the Grand Laboureur's carte bear out Baron Liebig's theory; and they warn us that we consume too much dear food, and despise or neglect vegetable foods that lie about us in an infinite variety. It is in this that the continental poor man has the advantage over us islanders. He has fifty resources—he can always find something cheap in the market. If he cannot afford meat, or fish, a dish of white haricots boiled with a little grease, give his inner man ample satisfaction, and the market-woman is merry on a mug of hot sorrel soup and a lump of brown bread. How can these people starve?

"But you will find the same abundance everywhere," Mr. Bloomsbury Baker continued. "I met a lady acquaintance, one market-morning at Mayence, carrying a cauliflower, as gracefully and proudly as she would bear a bouquet to a wedding. The German ladies, by the way, seem to me to be particularly knowing at market. The care with which they select their plums, and pears, and vegetables, and the way they have the current prices at their fingers' ends, struck me forcibly one day when I was strolling through the Gutenberg Platz, alive with the picturesque market-women, with their spotless wimples about their heads and throats, crowned with the pad upon which the basket is carried. They make pretty groups about a street fountain, as you have probably noticed. What a thrifty, knowing people, I thought, as I strayed among the vegetable baskets. We

laugh at the things they eat; but they look plump and merry, and many of them would be passing rich with the wage hundreds of my poor countrymen are starving upon in the East-end of London, or round about the docks at Liverpool."

The markets of Basel are primitive enough. The peasants of Basel-land bring in fruit, and vegetables, and poultry to their ancient enemies of Basel-stadt. The country-women stand and sit in rows, and hold the few fowls or eggs they have to sell in their aprons. The centre of the place is adorned with the statue of a monkey eating grapes, or of a goat, or of a knight in warlike array. There are neither sheds nor stalls. The townsfolk come forth betimes with nets, in which they carry home their purchases, and the chaffering proceeds, the producer and the consumer being in direct relations. Yonder grave country-woman, who has a few hens to sell, has reared them from the shell. This old man, of German aspect, peeped into the nests of those pigeons, for which he is seeking a customer, when they were fledgelings. It is the same with the vegetable and fruit-growers, none of whom have great stores to sell.

"Now, in England," said Mr. Bloomsbury Baker, "the producer is miles away from the consumer, and at every yard of every mile, a profit is made out of the consumer's pocket. You cannot get at the sweet simplicity of Basel, I know, in a great city; but I am puzzled to know why every quarter of a large English town should not have an open market—an open market for everything, as there is in Brussels. Or why London should not be divided into market districts like Paris."

At Lyons they have a vast market, in one corner of which the market produce is sold and cooked at market prices, and where you can sit at a table, and eat your fill for an incredibly small sum of money.

REMEDIES FOR HYDROPHOBIA.

SINCE the publication, on the tenth of August last, of our paper on Mad Dogs, the subject has been largely discussed in the Times, curiously mixed up, however, with the venom of serpents, with which it has no connexion whatever, except in the infliction of death by the bite of an animal. Still we may note that Mr. Skinner, late Commissioner of Public Works, Ceylon, successfully employed, to neutralise the

effects of snake poison, the same short and sharp expedient which we mentioned as being adopted in Haiti, where canine madness is common. "On two occasions," he says, "I cured men who were bitten by the tic polongos (supposed to be the most deadly poisonous of the snakes of that island), by simply cauterising the punctures with my knife, heaping a charge of powder from my flask, and blowing it up in each case. I repeated the operation several times."

Amongst other correspondents of the Times, Mr. E. Tattershall judiciously insists that it would be wrong to conclude that, because no remedy for hydrophobia has hitherto been discovered, no remedy ever will be found. There are two words which should rarely escape from a cautious man's lips, in the way of promise or prophecy; one is "always," the other "never." "Science will, I believe," writes Mr. Tattershall (October the 19th), "find a cure for this horrible malady. By all means let everything be tried. I have read (I think in a French paper) of a cure having been effected by constant hot baths. This might easily be tried. Let us try everything, and trust in skill and science to conquer disease as chloroform has conquered pain."

Our notes taken from French medical works include, together with other remedial measures, a peculiar vapour bath which seems to have rendered good service. Nor does it stand alone, if alleged success is to be the test of merit. Professor Marochetti records a Russian specific. When in the Ukraine, he was begged to attend fifteen persons bitten by a mad dog. While making his preparations, he was waited on by a deputation of old men, entreating him to trust the patients to the care of a peasant who for years had been celebrated for his cures of hydrophobia. Fourteen were consequently ceded to the peasant, while the fifteenth, a girl, was subjected to ordinary treatment. The specific draught was nothing more than a decoction of the flowering branches of the common broom, which was supposed to bring out, under the tongue, pustules containing the virus of canine madness. As fast as they appeared, the pustules were cauterised with a red-hot wire; after which, the patient used a gargle of broom decoction. The girl died on the seventh day, whilst the fourteen were cured in six weeks. Three years afterwards, Marochetti beheld the fortunate fourteen in the enjoyment of all their faculties.

Another highly-recommended antidote has been supplied by the island of Salamis. It consists of two ingredients; one, a powdered fly, *milabris græca*, which the native monks say was employed by Hippocrates for blisters; the second a plant, *cynanchum erectum*, mingled in the proportion of two parts of the latter to one of the former. A strong dose, taken every second or third day after the bite, produces effects similar to those of cantharides—that is, very dangerous effects. A more promising Greek remedy is the cauterisation of the wound with boiling oil. By converting the tissues into a dense mass, and so arresting the absorption of the virus, this caustic may perhaps act more efficaciously than the ordinary methods. Much would depend on the manipulation. It is clear, at least, that a skilful surgeon would be more humane, if not more successful, in his treatment than an ignorant empiric.

An interesting attempt has been made to ascertain whether canine madness be hereditary. Two bitches, bitten by a mad dog, and near their time of littering, were taken to the veterinary school at Alfort. Each of these poor creatures was shut up in a spacious box enclosed by solid iron bars, and violent symptoms of madness were speedily manifested. They tried to attack every one who approached their prison; they broke their teeth in fruitless attempts to bite the bars of their cage; while their bristling hair, blood-shot eyes, and foaming mouth, became still more frightful whenever any liquid was presented to them.

After their pups came into the world, the struggle between the disease and the sentiment of maternity appears to have been a touching spectacle. Sometimes, calm and gentle, they allowed their little ones to suck, licking them tenderly, and sheltering them beneath their own feverish bodies. Sometimes madness got the upper hand, and their rage was more furious than ever until one of their young ones uttered a cry. The sound brought them to themselves, and was followed by the manifestation of every sign of affection. But nature could hold out no longer. On successive mornings they were both found dead.

The bodies of the mothers being removed, the pups were supplied with milk, which they lapped greedily. Hopes were entertained that they would decide the question whether the virus that had destroyed their parents had entered into their own circulation. But in spite of every

attention they all shortly afterwards refused to take nourishment, and died one by one, with slight convulsions, from which no clear conclusion could be drawn. The experiment furnished no additional clue to the mystery of canine madness.

The Memoirs of the Paris Royal Society of Medicine contain a case which is analogous to that of Alfort, but goes further, because it resulted in a cure, as well as proved that hydrophobia is not necessarily transmitted to the offspring of the sufferer.

The experimenter was a surgeon named Beudon, practising at Grand Andelys. On the 5th of June, 1777, he found the household of a country patient in great alarm. A powerful house-dog had been bitten by a mad dog some time beforehand. They had applied the popular remedies of burning or branding him on the forehead, and giving him an omelette containing a mixture of oyster shells. In spite of these precautions, that very day he was seized with a sudden fit of rage, attacked a sow who was shortly to farrow, opening a large wound in her thigh, and then fell on a little dog, wounding him in the neck, and tearing off half one of his ears. The owner of the two injured animals ordered them both to be killed, but, at the surgeon's earnest request, allowed them to be shut up for experiment, on condition that no one should be called upon to take part in the treatment.

The sow was confined in a stable, and a hole was made in the boarded floor above it, that she might be inspected every day. She was fed by means of a stone trough, one end of which was in the stable-yard, the other inside the stable. For five days she ate nearly as usual; but on the sixth remained standing over her food, and so continued for three days without taking anything. On the tenth day she was seized with sudden fury. Her eyes glittered; she foamed at the mouth, rushing about the stable, and every now and then attacking a large block of wood. The fit lasted seven hours, when the poor creature became calm, and lay down.

Of this change Monsieur Beudon took advantage to administer his remedy. He let down into the stable a copper containing seven pints of strong hot vinegar, and then closed every hole in the stable to prevent communication with the external air. He posted a servant at the door to listen if the sow made any movement. In the course of an hour he reported that he thought he

heard her drinking. On peeping in, the sow, in fact, was on her legs, greedily drinking the vinegar in the copper. Bran, moistened with vinegar, was thrust into the trough; next morning it was all gone. They continued to mix her food with vinegar; her drink consisted of equal portions of vinegar and water sweetened with honey, with a small quantity of barley-meal added. The same diet was continued until she farrowed, and for a month afterwards; and then, as she had no further fit of rage, and the little pigs seemed in excellent health, the family were let out into a walled-in yard, and simply fed like other pigs, until the young ones, showing no symptom of hydrophobia, were sold off to some venturesome purchaser. Nor did their mother suffer any relapse.

The little dog that had been bitten, was caught and tied up in a room, and its wounds daily washed with salt and water, until they healed. Every day it was exposed to the fumes of vinegar, and it had vinegar given it to drink. During the month that this regimen was continued, the little dog remained free from any attack.

The big dog, who was the cause of all these disasters, and who had been pursued in vain while the fit was on him, returned to his kennel two days afterwards. With some difficulty the servant who usually fed him was persuaded to chain him up. He was then supplied with soup and water. He ate very little for four days, and then remained eight-and-forty hours without food. All that while he was sometimes standing and sometimes lying; his mouth was half-open, his eyes glittered, his respiration was very laboured. On the morning of the seventh day, they found him biting his chain, and the stones in his kennel; he was bathed in sweat (?), and his mouth was full of bloody foam. These symptoms lasted six-and-thirty hours, when he lay down quietly, stretched out at his full length. Advantage was taken of the interval to thrust into his kennel, with a long pole, a copper full of almost boiling vinegar. The kennel was covered with a thick cloth, to keep in the fumes, for an hour, when the covering was removed. The patient was found sitting on his hind quarters, licking his fore paws, which had been hurt during his convulsive efforts. He was then treated to very thin soup, made of butter, bread, and vinegar. This diet, and daily vinegar vapour baths, were daily administered. He suffered no fresh attack. The sow had a litter of pigs after her recovery; the little

dog continued as cheerful as his best friends could wish.

According to this, vinegar is a specific against hydrophobia. At any rate, it is a less desperate antidote than wourali poison (recommended by the late Charles Waterton), the bites of vipers, and other venom. But so many simple remedies have likewise been vaunted as specifics, that—confirmed and manifest hydrophobia still remaining terribly difficult, if not impossible, to cure—we are driven to the conclusion either that the cases cited were not cases of real canine madness, or that a specific which is effectual in some cases, is useless in others, and is therefore no specific at all. But have acids been fairly tested as antidotes to this dreadful bane?

As a precaution, the muzzle is a delusion and a snare. The great difficulty in doctoring both infants and animals arises from neither of them being able to describe their own symptoms and sensations. Now, if Dash could talk to his veterinary surgeon, he might reasonably express himself as follows:

"Keep your muzzles to yourself, dear doctor. There would be more sense, often, in muzzling men than in muzzling dogs. In my canine organisation, nature has given me sudorific glands nowhere but in my tongue. It is there that takes place with me, good doctor, the grand and important function of transpiration, which is indispensable to every living quadruped. In the greatest heats, after the most fatiguing runs, touch my skin, doctor, and it is always dry; look at my tongue, and it is streaming with fluid. But your muzzle checks this natural excretion. Unable to find its only outlet, it is retained, corrupting my humours and my blood, and giving me that terrible malady to which my dearest friends will be the first to fall victims. Madness is rare, doctor, with hounds and sporting dogs that are never muzzled; still rarer in the East, where dogs live at perfect liberty. Nine cases out of ten occur with domestic in-door dogs, which are subjected to all sorts of annoying restraints. My belief, doctor, is that muzzling has never hindered the evil, but may have frequently engendered it."

The last words of a French farmer who died of hydrophobia, but who retained his faculties until death released him, were, "Keep no more dogs. Have nothing more to do with dogs, in any way."

To follow out this advice, as a general rule, would be next to impossible. In spite of

the occasional fatal accidents which result from our companionship with the canine races, men neither can nor will banish the dog from their intimacy. A great point of conduct is, while using the good things given by Providence, not to abuse them. We may employ the strength, the swiftness, the instincts, and the fidelity of dogs, without raising them to the personal favour which would be more appropriately bestowed on a child. There should be a limit to the affection lavished even on a lap-dog. A very large proportion of fatal cases have resulted from the over-fondling of four-footed favourites. The poor affectionate creature, quite unconscious of evil, and with the worst symptoms of madness yet undeveloped, has only to respond to its master's caresses to inflict fatal injury. A cut, a scratch, a pin-prick, a crack, a little bit of skin abraded, may allow half a drop of saliva to be absorbed into the system, and the victim's death-warrant is irrevocably signed. A whole string of cases might be quoted. For instance, Baldus (Peter), one of the most celebrated jurisconsults of his time, whose reputation induced the Duke of Milan to invite him to grace the University of Pavia, died miserably on the 28th of April, 1400, at the age of seventy-six. A little dog whom he constantly caressed, and frequently kissed, had bitten him on the lip.

Hydrophobia is not the only brutes' disease capable of infecting men and women. Glanders, to which the horse is subject, is as incurable in its issue, both to man and beast, as hydrophobia; and if people kissed horses as frequently as they kiss dogs, human cases of glanders (now rare, but still occasional) might be nearly as frequent as hydrophobia, although perhaps not quite so; because the glandered horse, in its utter repulsiveness, itself gives a warning which is not afforded during the insidious commencement of canine madness. Sensible as both horses and dogs are of the blandishments of a human caress, there is no reason in risking our lives for the questionable amusement of kissing a brute.

And as we would avoid and escape every probability of hydrophobia, so should we refrain (if through no better motive) from all needless cruelty to dogs, all ill-natured teasing, all putting them to unworthy uses and unsuitable employments, as well as from long-continued and irritating confinement. If the human brutes who get up dog-fights are now and then bitten in the course of the fray, they deserve little commiseration,

in spite of the severity of the punishment, when it does come to a punishment. For vehicles drawn by dogs, the plea of their owners having a living to get, and that the welfare of dogs is of less importance than the prosperity of men, may be urged with more plausibility. Nevertheless, be it remembered that, in our latitude, the dog is adapted neither for a beast of draught nor of burden. The structure of his feet and the constitution of his skin unfit him for such tasks; and if we will rebel against Nature's arrangements, we must take the consequences.

THE YELLOW FLAG.

By EDMUND YATES,

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "NOBODY'S FORTUNE," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER VII. THE SEALED PACKET.

SEKING Martin Gurwood's attitude of despair, and the horror-stricken expression on Humphrey Statham's face, Pauline started back in amazement.

"Is it possible," she cried, "that some one has been beforehand with me, that you already know the news I bring? But no, that could not be."

She addressed herself to Martin, but, after a brief glance at her, he had resumed his former attitude, and it was Statham who replied.

"You find us talking over a matter which has caused great surprise and pain to both of us, but it is not one," he added quickly, seeing her start, "in which, Madame Du Tertre, you could be interested, or of which, indeed, you could have any knowledge. You appear to have some communication to make to us—does it concern Mrs. Claxton?"

"It does indeed," cried Pauline, with a deep sigh, and more than ever disconcerted at a glimpse of Martin Gurwood's tear-blurred face, which he lifted up as he heard her words, "it does indeed."

Martin did not say a word, but kept his eyes upon her with a hard, stony gaze. But Humphrey Statham cried out:

"For God's sake, woman, speak, and do not keep us longer in suspense! Is Alice ill—has anything happened to her?"

"What has happened to her you will be able to guess, when you read this slip of paper, which, on my return from a false errand on which I had been lured, I found in an envelope addressed to me."

She handed him a note as she spoke. Humphrey Statham took it, and read the following words in Alice's handwriting:

"I have found you and your accomplices out! I know my exact position now, and can guess why I was prevented from seeing John after his death!"

"Good Heavens, what can this mean?" cried Martin Gurwood, after Statham had read aloud the words of the note.

"Mean!" said Statham. "There is one portion of it, at all events, which is sufficiently intelligible. 'I know my exact position now.' She has learned what we have been so long endeavouring to hide from her! She knows the true relation in which she stood with Mr. Calverley."

"Merciful powers, do you think so?" cried Martin.

"What other meaning could that phrase convey?" said Humphrey Statham. "I have no doubt of it, and I think Madame Du Tertre is of my opinion; are you not, madame?"

"I am, indeed," said Pauline.

"But where can Alice have learned the secret?" said Martin; "who can have told it to her?"

"I have no doubt on that point either," said Pauline; "it must have been told to her by Mr. Wetter."

"Wetter!" cried Martin and Humphrey both at the same time.

"Mr. Henrich Wetter," repeated Pauline. "It was he who beguiled me into the City upon a false pretence, and on my return home I learned from the servant, that he had been at the house during my absence, and had a long interview with her mistress. Then I perceived at once that I had been got out of the way for this very purpose."

"Your suspicions of this man seem to have been right," said Martin, turning to Humphrey Statham, and speaking slowly, "though they did not point in that direction."

"Yes, as I told you before, I knew him to be a bad fellow, and a particularly undesirable acquaintance for Mrs. Claxton," said Statham. "But I confess, Madame Du Tertre, that I do not yet see why you should fix upon Mr. Wetter as the guilty person in the present instance, independently, that is to say, of the fact that he was with Mrs. Claxton in the interval between your leaving home and your return, during which she seems to have acquired this information. I should not have thought that Wetter could have known

anything about the Calverley and Claxton mystery!"

"He knows everything that he wants to know," cried Pauline with energy; "he is a fiend, a clever, merciless fiend. If it were his interest—and it was, as I happen to know—to make himself acquainted with Alice's history, he would learn it at whatever cost of money, patience, and trouble! It is he that has done this and no one else, be sure of that."

"We must allow then, I suppose," said Humphrey Statham, referring to the paper which he still held in his hand, "that the discovery which Mrs. Claxton claims to have made is that of her relations with Mr. Calverley, and it seems likely that she gained the information from Mr. Wetter, who gave it her for his own purpose. I take only a subordinate part in the matter, Martin, as your friend, but it strikes me that it is for you, as Alice's guardian, to ask Madame Du Tertre, who has evidently a bad opinion—worse than mine almost—of Mr. Wetter, why, having that opinion, she introduced this man to Alice, and suffered him to become intimate at Pollington-terrace."

"Why did you do this?" cried Martin, turning almost fiercely upon her. "You say yourself that this is a bad man, and that nothing will stop him when his mind is once made up to the commission of no matter what crime, and yet you bring him to the house and present him to this girl, whom it was so necessary to shield and protect."

He spoke so wrathfully that Statham looked up in surprise at his friend, and then glancing with pity at the shrinking figure of Pauline, said, in mitigation:

"You must recollect that Mr. Wetter discovered Madame Du Tertre's address by accident, and that he was her cousin!"

"He is not my cousin," said Pauline, in a low subdued voice, gazing at Martin with tearful eyes. "I deceived you in that statement, as in many others about Mr. Wetter, and about myself."

"Not your cousin," said Martin; "why then did you represent him to be so?"

"Because he insisted on it," said Pauline, gesticulating freely; "because he had a certain hold over me which I could not shake off, and which he would have exercised to my detriment if I had not implicitly obeyed him."

"But how could he have done anything to your detriment so far as we were concerned?" asked Martin.

"Very easily," replied Pauline. "It was my earnest desire for—for several reasons, to live in the house with Alice as her companion. Mr. Wetter would have prevented that."

"How could he have done so?"

"By exercising the influence which he possessed, and which lay in his acquaintance with a portion of my early life. He would have told you what he knew of me, and you would not have suffered me to remain with Alice."

"You mean to say——" cried Martin, with a certain shrinking.

"Oh, don't mistake me," she interrupted; "I was never wicked as you seem to imagine, only the manner of my bringing up, and the associations of my youth were such that, if you had known them, you might not have thought me a desirable companion for your friend."

"Let me ask you one question, Madame Du Tertre," said Humphrey Statham. "Up to this crisis you have undoubtedly discharged your duties with fidelity, and proved yourself to be Alice Claxton's warm and excellent friend. But what first induced you to seek for that post of companion—what made you desire to ally yourself so closely with this young woman?"

"What first influenced me to seek her out?" said Pauline; "not love for her, you may be assured of that. When first I saw this girl who has played such a part in my life, her head was resting on the shoulder of a man who, in bidding her adieu, bent down to kiss her upturned face, down which the tears were rolling. And that man was my husband."

"Your husband!" cried Martin.

"My husband, who is now dead. I knew not who the girl was; I had never seen her before; I had never heard of the existence of any one between whom and my husband there could properly exist such familiarity, and I at once jumped to the conclusion that he was her lover, and I hated her accordingly."

"But you have satisfied yourself that that was not the case?" asked Humphrey Statham, hurriedly.

"Oh, yes," said Pauline; "but not until a long time after I first saw them together; not until, so far as one of them was concerned, any feeling of mine was useless. I determined that if ever I saw this woman again I would be revenged upon her! Fortune stood my friend; I did see her; I became acquainted with the mystery of her story, and thus supplied myself with a weapon which could at any time be made

fatal to her; I won your confidence," turning to Martin, "and made myself necessary to you all, and then, and not till then, did I discover how ill-founded and unjust had been my suspicions; not till then did I learn, by the merest accident, that Alice was my husband's sister."

"Alice your husband's sister?" cried Martin Gurwood, in amazement. "And you were not aware of that fact until, animated by false suspicions, you had laid yourself out for revenge upon her?"

"Not until I had gained your confidence," said Pauline, "or at least taken the first steps towards gaining it. Not until that night at Hendon, when I was left alone with her, and when, while she was under the influence of the narcotic, I looked through her papers—you see I am speaking frankly now, and am desirous of hiding nothing, however much to my own disadvantage it may be—and discovered her relationship to my dead husband."

"Who was your husband?" said Martin Gurwood, in a softened voice.

"It is not likely that you ever heard of him," replied Pauline. "His name was Durham. In his last days he had some connexion with the house of Calverley and Company, being sent out as an agent to represent them in Ceylon."

"Durham!" cried Martin Gurwood. "Surely I have some recollection of that name. Yes; I remember it all now. He was the man who mysteriously disappeared from on board one of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's ships, and who was supposed to have fallen overboard and been drowned on his passage out."

"The same," said Pauline; "he was my husband."

"Durham!" cried Statham. "What was his Christian name?"

"Thomas. All his friends knew him as Tom Durham."

"Tom Durham; I knew him well, at one time intimately; but I had no idea that he was married, much less that you were his wife. I recollect now reading the paragraph about his supposed drowning the last time I left London on my holiday."

"You knew Tom Durham well?" cried Pauline, clasping her hands. "Mon Dieu, I see it all! You are the H. S., whose letter I have here!"

As she spoke she took a pocket-book from the bosom of her dress, and from it extracted a paper, which she handed to Statham.

"That is my handwriting surely," said

Humphrey, running his eyes over the document. "In it I acknowledge the receipt of a packet which I promised to take care of, and declare I will not give it up save to Tom himself, or to some person duly accredited by him. The packet is in that iron safe, where it has remained ever since."

"What do you imagine it contains?" asked Martin.

"I have not the remotest idea," replied his friend. "As you will see by a perusal of this paper, Tom Durham offered to inform me, but I declined to receive his confidence, partly because I thought my ignorance might be of service to him, partly to prevent myself being compromised."

"Do you think it could have any bearing upon Alice?" asked Pauline.

"If I thought so, I should not hesitate for an instant to place it in your hands! Whatever may have been the motive by which you were actuated at first, you have been a sure and steady friend to that poor girl, and I have perfect reliance on you."

"This poor man, Durham, will now never come to claim the packet himself," said Martin Gurwood, "and his widow is plainly his nearest representative. If there be anything in it which concerns Mrs. Claxton, we should never forgive ourselves for not having taken advantage of the information which it may contain."

"You think then, perhaps, on the whole I should be justified in handing it to Madame Du—— I mean to this lady," said Statham.

"Certainly, I think so."

"So be it," said Statham, walking round to the desk at which Martin was seated, and taking from the top drawer a key, with which he proceeded to unlock the iron safe. "There it is," he added, "duly marked 'Akhbar K,' and exactly in the same condition as when I received it from poor Tom's messenger."

And with these words he placed a packet in Pauline's hands.

She broke the seals, and the outside cover fell to the ground. Its contents were two sheets of paper, one closely written.

"There is nothing but this," she said, looking through it, then turning to Mr. Statham, "it will be as well, perhaps," she said, "if you were to read it aloud."

Humphrey took the paper from her hand and read as follows:

"MY DEAR HUMPHREY STATHAM,—Within a week after this reaches you I shall have left England for what may possibly prove a very long absence, and although I am

pretty well accustomed to a roving life, and have been so busy that I have never had time to be superstitious, I, for the first time, feel a desire to leave my affairs as much in order as possible, and to put as good a polish on my name as that name will bear.

"After all, however, I do not see that I need inflict a true and particular history of my life and adventures upon a man so busied as yourself. It would not be very edifying reading, my dear Statham, nor do I imagine that being mixed up in any way with my affairs would be likely to do you much good with the governor of the Bank of England or the directors of Lloyd's. I scarcely know how you, a steady, prosperous man of business, ever managed to continue your friendship with a harum-scarum fellow like myself! It was all very well in the early days when we were lads together, and you were madly in love with that Leeds milliner-girl"—Humphrey Statham's voice changed as he read the passage—"but now you are settled and respectable, and I am as great a ne'er-do-weel as ever!

"Not quite so great, perhaps, you will think, when you see that I am going to try to make amends for one wrong which I have done. I shall not bother you with anything else, my dear Statham; but I will leave this one matter in your hands, and I am sure that if any question about it ever arises, you will look to it and see it put straight for the sake of our old friendship, and don't break down or give it up because I seem to come out rather rough at the first, dear old man. Read it through and stand by me.

"You do not know—nor any one else scarcely for the matter of that—that I have a half-sister, the sweetest, prettiest, dearest, and most innocent little creature that ever shed sunshine on a household! She didn't shed it long on ours though, for as soon as she was old enough she was sent away to earn her own living, which she did by becoming governess in a Quaker's family at York. I was fond of her—very fond in my odd way—but I never saw much of her, as I was always rambling about, and when, after a return from an absence of many months, I heard that Alice was married to an elderly man, named Claxton, who was well off, and lived in comfort near London, I thought it was a good job for her, and troubled myself but little more about the matter.

"But one day, no matter how, my suspicions were aroused. I made inquiries, and—to cut the matter short—I discovered

that the respectable Mr. Claxton, to whom I had heard Alice was married, was a City merchant, whose real name was Calverley, and who had already a wife. I never doubted Alice for a moment; I knew the girl too well for that. I felt certain this old scoundrel had deceived her, and, as they say in the States, 'I went for him.'

"There's no use denying it, Humphrey, I acted like a mean hound; but what was I to do? I was always so infernally hard up! I brought the old boy to his bearings, and made him confess that he had acted a ruffian's part. And then I ought to have killed him I suppose! But I didn't. He pointed out to me that Alice was in perfect ignorance of her real position, that to be informed of it would probably be her death. And then—he is a tremendously knowing old bird—he made certain suggestions about improving my financial position and getting me regular employment, and giving me a certain sum of money down, so that somehow I listened to him more quietly than I was at first disposed to do. Not that I wasn't excessively indignant on Alice's account! Don't make any mistake about that. I told old Calverley that he had done her a wrong which must be set right so far as lay in his power, and I made him write out a paper at my dictation and sign it in full, with his head-clerk as witness to the signature. Of course the clerk did not know the contents of the document, but he saw his master sign it, and put his own name as witness. This was done two days ago, just at the time when they had been writing a lot of letters in the office about my taking up their agency in Ceylon, and no doubt he thought it had something to do with that. I shall enclose that paper in this letter, and you can use it in case of need. Not that I think old Calverley will go away from his word; in the first place, because notwithstanding this rascally trick he has played poor Alice, he seems a decent kind of fellow, and in the next, because he would be afraid to, so long as I am to the fore. But something might happen to him or to me, and then the paper would be useful.

"Here is the whole story, Humphrey, confided to your common sense and judgment, to act with as you think best, by

"Your old friend,

"TOM DURHAM.

"Something has happened to both of

them," said Humphrey Statham, solemnly, picking up the paper which had fluttered to the ground. "Now let us look at the enclosure:

"I, John Calverley, merchant, of Mincing-lane and Great Walpole-street, do hereby freely confess that having made the acquaintance of Alice Durham, to whom I represented myself as a bachelor of the name of Claxton, I married the said Alice Durham at the church of Saint Nicholas, at Ousegate, in the city of York, I being, at the same time, a married man, and having a wife then, and now, living. And I solemnly swear, and hereby set forth, that the said Alice Durham, now known as Alice Claxton, was deceived by me, had no knowledge of my former marriage, or of my name being other than that which I gave her, but fully and firmly believes herself to be my true and lawful wife.

"This I swear,

"JOHN CALVERLEY.

"Witness, Thomas Jeffreys,

"Head clerk to Messrs. Calverley and Co."

"That appears to me decisive as an assertion of Alice's innocence," said Martin Gurwood, looking round as Humphrey finished reading.

"To most persons it would be so," said Statham; "but Mrs. Calverley, with whom we chiefly have to deal, is not of the ordinary stamp. It will be advisable, however, I think, that we should see her at once, taking this document with us. If Madame Du—if Mrs. Durham's suspicions of Mr. Wetter are well founded, he will not have uttered his bark without being prepared to bite, and it is probably to Mrs. Calverley that he will first address himself."

"Do you wish me to accompany you?" asked Pauline.

"No," said Statham, "I think you had better return home."

"I think so too," said Martin; "your sister may be expecting you."

Her sister! In her broken condition it was some small comfort to Pauline to hear the acknowledgment of that connexion from Martin's lips.

Early in December will be published the

**EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER
FOR CHRISTMAS,**

1872.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 208. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1872.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER XIX. PISTOLS FOR TWO.

I KNEW nothing of all this. I was not to learn what had passed at that interview till many years later. Laura Grey, on my return, told me nothing. I am sure she was right. There were some things she could not have explained, and the stranger's apparently insane project of marrying penniless me was a secret better in her own keeping than in that of a simple and very self-willed girl.

When I returned there were signs of depression and anxiety in her looks, and her silence and abstraction excited my curiosity. She easily put me off, however. I knew that her spirits sometimes failed her, although she never talked about her troubles; and therefore her dejection was, after all, not very remarkable. We heard nothing more of our guest till next day, when Rebecca Torkill told us that he was again suffering from one of his headaches. The intelligence did not excite all the sympathy she seemed to expect. Shortly after sunset we saw him pass the window of our room, and walk by under the trees.

With an ingrained perversity, the more Laura Grey warned me against this man, the more I became interested in him. She and I were both unusually silent that evening. I think that her thoughts were busy with him; I know that mine were.

"We won't mind opening the window to-night," said Laura.

"I was just thinking how pleasant it would be. Why should we not open it?" I answered.

"Because we should have him here again; and he is not the sort of person

your mamma would like you to make acquaintance with."

I was a little out of humour, but did not persist. I sat in a sullen silence, my eyes looking dreamily through the window.

The early twilight had faded into night by the time the stranger reappeared. I saw him turn the line of his walk near the window; and seeing it shut, pause for a moment. I dare say he was more vexed than I. He made up his mind, however, against a scene. He looked on the ground and over his shoulder, again at the window.

Mr. Marston walked round the corner to the steward's house. The vague shadows and lights of night were abroad by this time.

Candles were in his room; he found Rebecca Torkill there, with a small tankard and a tea-cup, on a salver, awaiting his return.

"La! sir, to think of you doing such another wild thing, and you, only this minute, at death's door, with your head! And how is it now, please, sir?"

"A thousand thanks. My head is as well as my hat. My headache goes as it comes, in a moment. What is this?"

"Some gruel, please, sir, with sugar, white wine, and nutmeg. I thought you might like it."

"Caudle, by Jove!" smiled the gentleman, "isn't it?"

"Well, it is; and it's none the worse o' that."

"All the better," exclaimed Mr. Marston, who chose to be on friendly terms with the old lady. "How can I thank you?"

"It's just the best thing in the world to make you sleep, after a headache. You'll take some while it's hot."

"I can't thank you half enough," he said.

"I'll come back, sir, and see you by-and-bye," and the good woman toddled out, leaving him alone with his gruel.

"I must not offend her." He poured some into his cup, tasted it, and laughed quietly. "Sipping caudle! Well, this is rather a change for Richard Marston, by Jove! A change every way. Let us make a carouse of it," he said, and threw it out of the window.

Mr. Marston threw on his loose wrapper, and folded his muffler about his throat, replaced his hat, and with his cane in his fingers, was about to walk down to the town of Cardyllion. A word or two spoken, quite unsuspectingly, by Doctor Mervyn that morning, had touched a sensitive nerve, and awakened a very acute anxiety in Mr. Marston's mind. The result was his intended visit, at the fall of night, to the high-street of the quaint little town.

He was on the point of setting out, when Rebecca Torkill returned with a sliced lemon on a plate.

"Some likes a squeeze of a lemon in it," she observed, "and I thought I might as well leave it here."

"It is quite delicious, really," he replied, as Mrs. Torkill peeped into the open flagon.

"Why," said she, in unfeigned admiration, "I'm blest if he's left a drop! Ah! ha! Well, it was good; and I'll have some more for you before you go to bed. But you shouldn't drink it off, all at a pull, like that. You might make yourself ill that way."

"We men like good liquor so well—so well—we—we—what was I saying? Oh! yes, we like our liquor so well, we never know when we have had enough. It's a bad excuse; but let it pass. I'm going out for a little walk, it always sets me up after one of those headaches. Good evening, Mrs. Torkill."

He was thinking plainly of other matters than her, or her caudle; and, before she had time to reply, he was out of the door.

It was a sweet, soft night; the moon was up. The walk from Malory to the town is lonely and pretty.

He took the narrow road that approaches Cardyllion in an inland line, parallel to the road that runs by the shore of the estuary. His own echoing footsteps among the moonlit trees was the only sign of life, except the distant barking of a watch-dog,

now and then, that was audible. A melancholy wind was piping high in the air, from over the sea; you might fancy it the aerial lamentation of the drowned.

He was passing the churchyard now, and stopped partly to light a cigar, partly to look at the old church, the effect of which, in the moonlight, was singular. Its gable and towers cast a sharp black shadow across the grass and gravestones, like that of a gigantic hand, whose finger pointed toward him. He smiled cynically as the fancy struck him.

"Another grave, there, I should not wonder, if the news is true. What an ass that fellow is! Another grave, I dare say; and in my present luck, I suppose I shall fill it—fill it! That's ambiguous; yes, the more like an oracle. That shadow does look curiously like a finger pointing at me!"

He smoked for a time, leaning on the pier of the iron wicket, that from this side admits to the churchyard, and looking in, with thoughts very far from edifying.

"This will be the second disagreeable discovery, without reckoning Carmel, I shall have made since my arrival in this queer corner of the world. Who could have anticipated meeting Laura, here; or that whining fool, Carmel? Who would have fancied that Jennings, of all men, would have turned up in this out-of-the-way nook? By Jove, I'm like Saint Paul, hardly out of the shipwreck when a viper fastens on my hand. Old Sprague made us turn all that into elegiacs. I wonder whether I could make elegiacs now."

He loitered slowly on, by the same old road, into Castle-street, the high-street of the quaint little town of steep roofs and many gables.

The hall-door of the Verney Arms was open, and the light of the lamp glowed softly on the pavement.

Mr. Marston hated suspense. He would rather make a bad bargain, off-hand, than endure the torture of a long negotiation. He would stride out to meet a catastrophe rather than await its slow, sidelong approaches. This intolerance of uncertainty made him often sudden in action. He had come down to the town simply to reconnoitre. He was beginning, by this time, to meditate something more serious.

Under the shadow of the houses opposite, he walked slowly up and down the silent flagway, eyeing the door of the Verney Arms askance, as he finished his cigar.

It so happened, that exactly as he had

thrown away the stump of it, a smoker, who had just commenced his, came slowly down the steps of the Verney Arms, and stood upon the deserted flagway, and as he puffed indolently, he looked up the street, and down the street, and up at the sky.

The splendid moon shone full on his face, and Mr. Marston knew him. He was tall and slight, and rather good-looking, with a face of great intelligence, heightened with something of enthusiasm, and stood there smoking, in happy unconsciousness that an unfriendly eye was watching him across the street.

Mr. Marston stood exactly opposite. The smoker, who had emerged from the Verney Arms, stood before the centre of the steps, and Mr. Marston, on a sudden, as if he was bent on walking straight through him into the hotel, walked at a brisk pace across the street, and halted, within a yard, in front of him.

"I understand," said Marston instantly, in a low, stern tone, "that you said at Black's, when I was away yachting, that you had something to say to me."

The smoker had lowered his cigar, and was evidently surprised, as well he might be; he looked at him hard for some time, and at length replied as grimly:

"Yes, I said so; yes, I do; I mean to speak to you."

"All right; no need to raise our voices here, though; I think you had better find some place where we can talk without exciting attention."

"Come this way," said the tall young man, turning suddenly and walking up the street at a leisurely pace. Mr. Marston walked beside him, a yard or two apart. They might be very good friends, for anything that appeared to a passer-by. He turned down a short and narrow by-street, with only room for a house or two, and they found themselves on the little common that is known as the Green of Cardyllion. The sea, at its further side, was breaking in long, tiny waves along the shingle, the wind came over the old castle with a melancholy sighing; the green was solitary; and only here and there, from the windows of the early little town, a light gleamed. The moon shone bright on the green, turning the grass to grey, and silvering the ripples on the dark estuary, and whitening the misty outlines of the noble Welsh mountains across the water. A more tranquillising scene could scarcely be imagined.

When they had got to the further end, they stopped, as if by common consent.

"I'm ready to hear you," said Marston.

"Well, I have only to tell you, and I'm glad of this opportunity, that I have ascertained the utter falsehood of your stories, and that you are a coward and a villain."

"Thanks; that will do, Mr. Jennings," answered Marston, growing white with fury, but speaking with cold and quiet precision. "You have clenched this matter by an insult which I should have answered by cutting you across the face with this"—and he made his cane whistle in the air—"but that I reserve you for something more effectual, and shall run no risk of turning the matter into a police-office affair. I have neither pistols nor friend here. We must dispense with formalities; we can do all that is necessary for ourselves, I suppose. I'll call to-morrow, early, at the Verney Arms. A word or two will settle everything."

He raised his hat ever so little, implying that that conference, for the present, was over; but before he could turn Mr. Jennings, who did not choose to learn more than was unavoidable to his honour, said,

"You will find a note at the bar."

"Address it Richard Wynyard, then."

"Your friend?"

"No; myself."

"Oh! a false name?" sneered Mr. Jennings.

"You may use the true one, of course. My tailor is looking for me a little more zealously, I fancy, than you were; and if you publish it in Cardyllion, it may lead to his arresting me, and saving you all further trouble in this, possibly, agitating affair." The young man accompanied these words with a cold laugh.

"Well, Richard Wynyard, be it," said Mr. Jennings, with a slight flush.

And with these words, the two young men turned their backs on each other.

Mr. Jennings walked along beside the shingle, with the sound of the light waves in his ears, and thinking rather hurriedly, as men will, whom so serious a situation has suddenly overtaken.

Marston turned, as I said, the other way, and without entering the town again, approached Malory by the narrow road that passes close under the castle walls, and follows the line of the high banks overlooking the estuary.

If there be courage and mental activity, and no conscience, we have a very dangerous devil.

A spoiled child, in which self is supreme, who has no softness of heart, and some cleverness and energy, easily degenerates into that sort of Satan. And yet, in a kind of way, Marston was popular. He could spend money freely—it was not his own—and when he was in spirits he was amusing.

When he stared in Jennings's face this evening, the bruise and burning of an old jealousy were in his heart. The pain of that hellish hate is often lightly inflicted; but what is more cruel than vanity?

He had abandoned the pursuit in which that jealousy was born, but the hatred remained. And now he had his revenge in hand. It is a high stake, one's life on a match of pistol-shooting. But his brute courage made nothing of it. It was an effort to him to think himself in danger, and he did not make that effort. He was thinking how to turn the situation to account.

CHAPTER XX. THE WOOD OF PLAS YLWD.

NEXT morning, Mr. Marston, we learned, had been down to Cardyllion early. He had returned at about ten o'clock, and he had his luggage packed up, and despatched again to the proprietor of the Verney Arms.

So we might assume that he was gone.

The mountain that had weighed on Laura Grey's spirits was perceptibly lightened. I heard her whisper to herself, "Thank God!" when she heard Rebecca Torkill's report, and the further intelligence that their guest had told her and Thomas Jones that he was going to the town to return no more to Malory. Laura was now, again, quite like herself.

For my part, I was a little glad, and (shall I confess it?) also a little sorry! I had not quite made up my mind respecting this agreeable Mr. Marston, of whom Mr. Carmel and Miss Grey had given each so alarming a character.

About an hour later I was writing to mamma, and sitting at the window, when raising my eyes I saw Laura Grey and Mr. Marston, much to my surprise, walking side by side, up the avenue towards the hall-door. They appeared to be in close conversation; Mr. Marston seemed to talk volubly and carelessly, and cut the heads off the weeds with his cane, as he sauntered by her side. Laura Grey's handkerchief she held to her eyes, except now and then, when she spoke a few words, as it seemed, passionately.

When they came to the court-yard, op-

posite to the hall-door, she broke away from him, hurried across, ran up the steps, and shut the door. He stood where she had left him, looking after her and smiling. I thought he was going to follow; he saw me in the window, and raised his hat still smiling, and with this farewell salute he turned on his heel and walked slowly away towards the gate.

I ran to the hall, and there found Laura Grey. She had been crying, and was agitated.

"Ethel, darling," she said, "let nothing on earth induce you to speak to that man again. I implore of you to give me your solemn promise. If he speaks truth it will not cost you anything, for he says he is going away this moment not to return."

It certainly looked very like it, for he had actually despatched his two boxes, he had "tipped" the servants handsomely at the steward's house, and having taken a courteous leave of them, and left with Mrs. Torkill a valedictory message of thanks for me, he had got into a "fly" and driven off to the Verney Arms.

Well, whether for good or ill, he had now unquestionably taken his departure; but not without leaving a sting. The little he had spoken to Miss Grey, at the moment of his flight, had proved, it seemed, a Parthian arrow tipped with poison. She seemed to grow more and more miserable every hour. She had lain down on her bed, and was crying bitterly, and trembling. I began to grow vexed at the cruelty of the man who had deliberately reduced her to that state. I knew not what gave him the power of torturing her. If I was angry, I was also intensely curious. My questions produced no clearer answers than this. "Nothing, dear, that you could possibly understand without first hearing a very long story. I hope the time is coming when I may tell it all to you. But the secret is not mine; it concerns other people; and at present I must keep it."

Mr. Marston had come and gone, then, like a flash of light, leaving my eyes dazzled. The serenity of Malory seemed now too quiet for me; the day was dull. I spent my time sitting in the window, or moping about the place. I must confess that I had, by no means, the horror of this stranger that the warnings of Mr. Carmel and Laura Grey ought, I suppose, to have inspired. On the contrary, his image came before me perpetually, and everything I looked at, the dark trees, the window-sill, the garden,

the estuary, and the ribs of rock round which the cruel sea was sporting, recalled the hero of a terrible romance.

I tried in vain to induce Laura to come with me for a walk, late in the afternoon. So I set out alone, turning my back on Cardyllion, in the direction of Penruthyn Priory. The sun was approaching the western horizon as I drew near the picturesque old farm-house of Plas Ylwd.

A little to the south of this stretches a fragment of old forest, covering some nine or ten acres of peaty ground. It is a decaying wood, and in that melancholy and miserable plight, I think, very beautiful. I would commend it as a haunt to artists in search of "studies," who love huge trees with hollow trunks, some that have "cast" half their boughs as deer do their antlers; some wreathed and laden with ivy, others that stretch withered and barkless branches into the air; ground that is ribbed and unequal, and cramped with great ringed snake-like roots, that writhe and knot themselves into the earth; here and there over-spread with little jungles of bramble, and broken and burrowed by rabbits.

Into this grand and singular bit of forest, now glorified by the coloured light of evening, I had penetrated some little way.

Arrested in my walk by the mellow song of a blackbird, I listened in the sort of ecstasy that every one has, I suppose, experienced, under similar circumstances, and I was in the full enjoyment of this sylvan melody, when I was startled, and the bird put to flight by the near report of fire-arms.

Once or twice I had heard boys shooting at birds in this wood, but they had always accompanied their practice with shouting and loud talking.

A dead silence followed this. I had no reason for any misgivings about so natural an interruption in such a place, but I did feel an ominous apprehension.

I began to move, and was threading my way through one of these blackberry thickets, when I heard, close to my side, the branches of some underwood thrust aside, and Mr. Marston, looking pale and wicked, walked quickly by.

It was plain he did not see me; I was screened by the stalks and sprays through which I saw him.

He had no weapon as he passed me; he was drawing on his glove. The sudden appearance of Mr. Marston, whom I believed to be by this time miles away—at the other side of Cardyllion—was a shock that rather confirmed my misgivings.

I waited till he was quite gone, and then

passed down the path he had come by. I saw nothing to justify alarm, so I walked a little in the same direction, looking to the right and left.

In a little opening among the moss-grown trunks of the trees, I soon saw something that frightened me. It was a man lying on his back, deadly pale, upon the ground; his waistcoat was open, and his shirt-front covered with blood, that seemed to ooze from under his hand, that was pressing on it; his hat was on the ground, some way behind. A pistol lay on the grass beside him, and another not far from his feet.

I was very much frightened, and the sight of blood made me feel faint. The wounded man saw me, I knew, for his eyes were fixed on me; his lips moved, and there was a kind of straining in his throat; he said a word or two, though I could not at first hear what. With a horrible reluctance, I came near and leaned a little over him, and then heard distinctly:

"Pray send help."

I bethought me instantly of the neighbouring farm-house of Plas Ylwd, and knowing this little forest tract well, I ran through it nearly direct to the farm-yard, and quickly succeeded in securing the aid of Farmer Prichard and all his family, except his wife, who stayed at home to get a bed ready for the reception of the wounded stranger.

We all trooped back again through the woods, at a trot, I at their head, quite forgetting my dignity in my excitement.

The wounded man appeared fainter. But he beckoned to us with his hand, without raising his arm, and with a great effort he said: "The blame is mine—all my fault—remember, if I die. I compelled this meeting."

I got Prichard to send his son, without a moment's delay, to Cardyllion, to bring Doctor Mervyn, and as they got the bleeding man on towards Plas Ylwd, I, in a state of high excitement, walked swiftly homeward, hoping to reach Malory before the declining light failed altogether.

SOMETHING LIKE A LORD MAYOR'S DAY.

In this our day and generation, the annual pageant known as "Lord Mayor's Show," is in an extremely unsatisfactory condition. With our modern matter-of-fact utilitarianism, we are half ashamed of its grotesque splendours; yet the venerable institution dies very hard, and no man now

alive may survive to see the day that the Lord Mayor will quietly go to Westminster in a first-class carriage on the Metropolitan District Railway. It would be well that a definite understanding were arrived at on the subject of Lord Mayor's day. If we are to have no more cakes and ale, if men in armour, six horse teams, bands and banners, are really nonsensical, and out of place in this age of iron of ours, let that stern, grim fact be recognised and acted on. If, on the other hand, there be a meaning and a virtue in such a pageant as Lord Mayor's show, why should it be gone about in a half-hearted, apologetic, moon-faced kind of way? In the beautiful allegorical language of the Transatlantic logician, "Let us go the whole hog, or none at all."

Sir Samuel Fludyer, Lord Mayor of London in the year 1761, the year of the marriage of good King George the Third, appears to have gone the whole hog with a thoroughness which would suggest that utilitarianism had not come into existence in his day. In a contemporary chronicle we find a very sprightly narrative of Sir Samuel's Lord Mayor's show, in which the king and queen, with "the rest of the royal family" participated, their majesties, indeed, not getting home from the Guildhall ball until two in the morning. Our sight-seer was an early riser. He found the morning foggy, as is common to this day in London about the 9th of November, but soon the fog cleared away, and the day was brilliantly fine—an exception, he notes, to what had already, in his time, become proverbial that the Lord Mayor's day is almost invariably a bad one. He took boat on the Thames, that he might accompany the procession of state barges on their way to Westminster. He reports "the silent highway" as being quite covered with boats and gilded barges. The barge of the Skinners' Company was distinguished by the outlandish dresses of strange-spotted skins and painted hides worn by the rowers. The barge belonging to the Stationers' Company, after having passed through one of the narrow arches of Westminster Bridge, and tacked about to do honour to the Lord Mayor's landing, touched at Lambeth, and took on board, from the archbishop's palace, a hamper of claret—the annual tribute of theology to learning. The tippie must have been good, for our chronicler tells us that it was "constantly reserved for the future regalement of the master, wardens, and court of assistants, and not suffered to be shared by

the common crew of liverymen." He did not care to witness the familiar ceremony of swearing in the Lord Mayor in Westminster Hall, but made the best of his way to the Temple-stairs, where it was the custom of the Lord Mayor to land on the conclusion of the aquatic portion of the pageant. There he found some of the City companies already landed, and drawn up in order in Temple-lane, between two rows of the train-bands, "who kept excellent discipline." Other of the companies were wiser in their generation; they did not land prematurely to cool their heels in Temple-lane, while the royal procession was passing along the Strand, but remained on board their barges regaling themselves comfortably. The Lord Mayor encountered Samaritans in the shape of the masters and benchers of the Temple, who invited him to come on shore and lunch with them in the Temple Hall.

Our sight-seer made his way as well as he could through the crowd to the Queen's Arms Tavern, at the corner of St. Paul's Churchyard, "kept by honest Bates, so remarkable for his good wines and good treatment in every other respect." There our sight-seer and his party had secured a room which commanded a complete view of both the royal and the civic processions. Every house from Temple-bar to Guildhall was crowded from top to bottom, and many had scaffoldings besides, carpets and rich hangings were hung out on the fronts all the way along; and our friend notes that the citizens were not mercenary, but "generously accommodated their friends and customers gratis, and entertained them in the most elegant manner, so that though their shops were shut, they might be said to have kept open house."

It is to be feared we do not thoroughly appreciate the advantages we derive from the exertions of the merry men commanded by Colonels Henderson and Fraser. For want of them, and "by the mismanagement of those who should have taken care to clear the way of hackney-coaches and other obstructions," the royal procession, which set out from St. James's Palace at noon, did not get to Cheapside until near four, when in the short November day it must have been getting dark. Our sight-seer, as the royal family passed his window, counted between twenty and thirty coaches-and-six belonging to them and to their attendants, besides those of the foreign ambassadors, officers of state, and the principal nobility. There preceded their majesties, the Duke of Cumberland,

Princess Amelia, the Duke of York, in a new state coach, the Princes William Henry and Frederic, the Princess Dowager of Wales, and the Princesses Augusta and Caroline in one coach, preceded by twelve footmen with black caps, and with guards and a grand retinue. The king and queen were in separate coaches, and had separate retinues. Our friend in the window of the Queen's Arms was in luck's way. From a booth at the eastern end of the churchyard the children of Christ Church Hospital paid their respects to their majesties, the senior scholar of the grammar school reciting a lengthy and loyal address, after which the boys chanted God Save the King. At last the royal family got to the house of Mr. Barclay, the Quaker, from the balcony of which, hung with crimson silk damask, they were to see, with what daylight remained, the civic procession that presently followed; but in the interval came Mr. Pitt, in his chariot, accompanied by Earl Temple. The great commoner was then in the zenith of his popularity, and our sight-seer narrates how, "at every step, the mob clung about every part of the vehicle, hung upon the wheels, hugged his footmen, and even kissed his horses. There was an universal huzza, and the gentlemen in the windows and the balconies waved their hats, and the ladies their handkerchiefs."

The Lord Mayor's state coach was drawn by six beautiful iron-grey horses, gorgeously caparisoned, and the companies made a grand appearance. Even a century ago, however, degeneracy had set in. Our sight-seer complains that the armourers' and braziers', the skimmers' and the fishmongers' companies, were the only companies that had something like the pageantry exhibited of old on the occasion. The armourers sported an archer riding erect in his car, having his bow in his left hand, and his quiver and arrows hanging behind his left shoulder; as also a man in complete armour. The skimmers were distinguished by seven of their company being dressed in fur, having their skins painted in the form of Indian princes. The pageant of the fishmongers consisted of a statue of Saint Peter finely gilt, a dolphin, two mermaids, and a couple of sea-horses; all which duly passed before Georgius Rex, as he leant over the balcony with his Charlotte by his side.

Our chronicler understood well the strategic movements indispensable to the zealous sight-seer. As soon as the Lord Mayor's procession had passed him, he "posted along the back lanes, to avoid the crowd,"

and got to the Guildhall in advance of the Lord Mayor. He had procured a ticket for the banquet through the interest of a friend, who was one of the committee for managing the entertainment, and also a "mazarine." It is explained that this was a kind of nickname given to the common councilmen, on account of their wearing mazarine blue silk-gowns. He learned that the doors of the hall had been first opened at nine in the morning for the admission of ladies into the galleries, who were the friends of the committee men, and who got the best places; and subsequently at twelve for the general reception of all who had a right to come in. What a terrible spell of waiting those fortunate unfortunates comprising the earliest batch must have had! The galleries presented a very brilliant show, and among the company below were all the officers of state, the principal nobility, and the foreign ambassadors. The Lord Mayor arrived at half-past six, and the sheriffs went straight to Mr. Barclay's to conduct the royal family to the hall. The passage from the hall-gate to steps leading to the King's Bench was lined with mazarines with candles in their hands, by aldermen in their red gowns, and gentlemen pensioners with their axes in their hands. At the bottom of the steps stood the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress, with the entertainment committee, to receive the members of the royal family as they arrived. The princes and princesses, as they successively came in, waited in the body of the hall until their majesties' entrance. On their approach being announced the Lord and Lady Mayoress, as the chronicler puts it, advanced to the great door of the hall; and at their majesties' entrance, the Lord Mayor presented the City sword, which being returned, he carried before the king, the queen following with the Lady Mayoress behind her. "The music had struck up, but was drowned in the acclamations of the company; in short all was life and joy; even their giants, Gog and Magog, seemed to be almost animated." The king, at all events, was more than almost animated; he volubly praised the splendour of the scene, and was very gracious to the Lord Mayor, on the way to the council chamber, followed by the royal family and the reception committee. This room reached, the recorder delivered the inevitable addresses, and the wives and daughters of the aldermen were presented. These ladies had the honour of being saluted by his majesty, and of kissing the queen's hand, and then the sheriffs were knighted,

as also was the brother of the Lord Mayor. After half an hour's stay in the council chamber, the royal party returned into the hall, and were conducted to the upper end of it, called the hustings, where a table was provided for them, at which they sat by themselves. There had been a knotty little question of etiquette. The ladies-in-waiting on the queen had claimed the right of custom to dine at the same table with her majesty, but this was disallowed, and they dined at the table of the Lady Mayoress in the King's Bench. The royal table "was set off with a variety of emblematic ornaments beyond description elegant," and a superb canopy was placed over their majesties' heads at the upper end. For the Lord Mayor, aldermen, and their ladies, there was a table on the lower hustings. The privy councillors, ministers of state, and great nobles, dined at a table on the right of this; the foreign ministers at one on the left. For the mazarines and the general company there were eight tables in the body of the hall, while the judges, serjeants, &c., dined in the old council chamber, and the attendants of the distinguished visitors were regaled in the Court of Common Pleas.

George and his consort must have got up a fine appetite between noon and nine o'clock, the hour at which the dinner was served. The aldermen on the committee acted as waiters at the royal table. The Lord Mayor stood behind the king, "in quality of chief butler, while the Lady Mayoress waited on her majesty" in the same capacity, but soon after seats were taken they were graciously sent to their seats. The dinner consisted of three courses, besides the dessert, and the purveyors were Messrs. Horton and Birch, the same house which in the present day supplies most of the civic banquets. The bill of fare at the royal table is extant, and is worth a little study on the part of modern epicures:

FIRST SERVICE.

Turrones, venison, turtle soups, fish of every sort, viz., dorys, mullets, turbots, blets, tench, soals, &c., nine dishes.

SECOND SERVICE.

A fine roast, ortolans, teals, quails, ruffs, knotts, peachicks, snipes, partridges, pheasants, &c., nine dishes.

THIRD SERVICE.

Vegetables and made dishes, green pease, green morelles, green truffles, cardoons, artichokes, ducks' tongues, fat livers, &c., eleven dishes.

FOURTH SERVICE.

Curious ornaments in pastry and makes, jellies, blomonges in variety of shapes, figures, and colours, nine dishes.

In all, not including the dessert, there

were placed on the tables four hundred and fourteen dishes, hot and cold. Wine was varied and copious. In the language of the chronicler, "Champagne, burgundy, and other valuable wines were to be had everywhere, and nothing was so scarce as water." When the second course was being laid on the toasts began. The common crier, standing before the royal table, demanded silence, and then proclaimed aloud that their majesties drank to the health and prosperity of the Lord Mayor, aldermen, and common council of the City of London. Then the common crier, in the name of the civic dignitaries, gave the toast of health, long life, and prosperity to their most gracious majesties. After dinner there was no tarrying over the wine cup. The royal party retired at once to the council chamber, "where they had their tea." What became of the rest of the company is not mentioned, but clearly the Guildhall could have been no place for them. That was summarily occupied by an army of carpenters. The tables were struck and carried out. The hustings, where the great folks had dined, and the floor of which had been covered with rich carpeting, was covered afresh, and the whole hall rapidly got ready for the ball, with which the festivities were to conclude. On the return of their majesties, and as soon as they were seated under the canopy, the ball was opened by the Duke of York and the Lady Mayoress. It does not appear that the royal couple took the floor, but "other minuets succeeded by the younger branches of the royal family with ladies of distinction."

About midnight Georgius Rex, beginning probably to get sleepy with all this derangement of his ordinarily methodical way of living, signified his desire to take his departure, but things are not always possible even when kings are in question. Such was the hurry and confusion outside, at least that is the reason assigned by the chronicler, that there was great delay in fetching up the royal carriages to the Guildhall door. My own impression is that the coachmen were all drunk, not excepting the state coachman himself. Their majesties waited half an hour before their coach could be brought up, and perhaps, after all the interchange of civilities, went away in a tantrum at the end. It is clear the Princess Dowager of Wales did, for she waited some time in the temporary passage, "nor could she be prevailed on to retire into the hall." There was no procession on the return from

the City. The royal people trundled home as they best might, according as their carriages came to hand. But we are told that on the return journey, past midnight as it was, the crowd in some places was quite as great as it had been in the daytime, and that Mr. Pitt was vociferously cheered all the way to his own door. The king and queen did not get home to St. James's till two o'clock in the morning, and it is a confirmation of the suggestion that the coachman must have been drunk, that in turning under the gate one of the glasses of their coach was broken by the roof of the sentry-box. As for the festive people left behind in the Guildhall, they kept the ball up till three o'clock, and we are told that "the whole was concluded with the utmost regularity and decorum." Indeed, Sir Samuel Fildyer's Lord Mayor's day appears to have been a triumphant success. His majesty himself, we are told, was pleased to declare "that to be elegantly entertained he must come into the City." The foreign ministers in general expressed their wonder, and one of them politely said in French, that this entertainment was only fit for one king to give to another.

CLOSED AT TWELVE.

"SORRY to turn you out, gentlemen," said the landlord, "but it's a quarter to twelve, and the police is very strict since the New Act."

The scene was the parlour of a little, old, cosy tavern, where a few of us meet, now and then, for a quiet rubber. Upon this particular evening, the whist had been such as Hoyle or Cavendish might have dreamed of in a moment of delightful reverie. The players were equally matched; the cards were wonderfully impartial; the honours were always easy; neither party had scored more than the odd trick; each rubber had been composed of singles, and each side had won one rubber. The cards were being made for the conquering rubber, and we had stopped to discuss a lead of trumps in the last game, when the landlord entered and was sorry to turn us out.

"Upon my word, this is too bad," said the Captain (of volunteers); "we really must play this third rubber."

"Then you must play it without me," said the Lawyer, jumping up briskly and preparing to depart. "A man in my profession can't afford to spend the night in Bow-street, and be fined forty shillings to-

morrow morning. Good night, gentlemen," and off he trotted.

"This is the sort of thing that makes this New Act so unpopular," said the Merchant, shuffling the cards. "What harm could we do if we stayed here after twelve?"

"Unpopular?" asked the Author; "with whom is the Act unpopular? Do you mean with the publicans?"

"No," replied the Merchant, "I mean with the people—with everybody."

"Yes, but with what people? Who is everybody? It isn't unpopular with the teetotal people, nor with the temperance people. Surely they are somebodies."

"No, no," interposed the Captain, "he means everybody who likes his glass of grog, and, being an Englishman, don't like to be dictated to as to when he shall have it, and when he shan't have it."

"You don't mean to say you object to the clause which prohibits the sale of liquors to drunken men!"

"Certainly not," said the Merchant. "I approve of that most decidedly. And also of the clause about minors. But I refer to the twelve o'clock closing. What right has this New Act to turn us out now?"

"The same right that the Old Act had to turn us out at one o'clock. You never objected to that?"

"Well, one o'clock was late enough for anybody."

"Too late for many people. However, that's a matter of opinion. Once admit that the law can regulate the hours of closing—and everybody has admitted that principle—and the difference between one hour and another becomes simply a question of expediency and experience."

"But do you think twelve o'clock a good hour?" asked the Captain.

"Yes; the best hour. Every one who is obliged to get up at a reasonably early hour in the morning ought to be in bed by midnight. This class constitutes the vast majority of the people, and laws are made for majorities."

"But there are exceptions to every rule."

"It is just striking twelve. Come along with me and I'll show you some exceptions to this rule."

When we were outside the tavern, walking rapidly along in the damp night air, the Merchant suddenly observed, "Stop! I am an exception. It's very wet to-night, and I should like a glass of whisky."

"Already? Why, you had one three minutes ago at the tavern."

"I don't mean at this very moment; but I shall want a glass of whisky to keep the cold out."

"You have plenty of whisky at home, I presume."

"But suppose I want it before I get home?"

"You might control your desire, or stop at your club."

"But suppose I don't want to control my desire, and I am two miles from my club, and still want my whisky?"

"Then yours is a very exceptional case; but it is one which this New Act has been weak enough to provide for. Go to one of the houses licensed to keep open an hour later than twelve."

"I might not be able to reach one of them by one o'clock."

"Then you would be no worse off than under the Old Act; for that closed all the public-houses at one."

"Yes; but it allowed them all to keep open till one, while the New Act only allows a few to be open, and I might not be near one of these exceptional houses."

"Under such very exceptional circumstances you ought always to carry a flask in your pocket, or take a cab, or live nearer Covent Garden. But, surely, you do not argue that such a number of supposes can form a valid objection to the law?"

"No, not in my own case. But I was thinking of workpeople kept out late at night and unable to get a drink before going to bed."

"I know very few classes of workpeople who are unable to get to bed before twelve. The printers, the bakers, and all other workmen who are kept up after midnight, can easily club together in their shops and offices and buy spirits by the gallon, and beer by the barrel, if they must have a drain after work."

"Ah, but that is not the same to them as the public-house."

"Not the same; but can you deny that it's better for them and cheaper for them?"

Just at this stage of the conversation we came to one of the specially licensed houses. The landlord was standing at the door, and as each customer presented himself the landlord asked, "What theatre?" Then the visitor gave the name of a theatre, and was admitted.

"There!" exclaimed the Merchant, "we haven't been to the theatre, and we can't get in even here."

"Oh!" said the Captain, laughing, "it

isn't as bad as all that. There's nothing of that sort in the Act. Walk up and I'll show you how it works."

We advanced, the Captain leading. As he approached the landlord he said boldly: "Three! St. James's Theatre."

"Have you all been to the theatre?" asked the landlord.

"Often," replied the Captain, with a wink, and we passed into the bar, and called for some drink, which we did not want. Fifty other persons, crowded into a small room, were doing the same thing. There seemed to be something clandestine, and therefore exciting, in this special drink. There were people outside who couldn't get it; we had used strategy to obtain an entrance; the subtle exhilaration of selfishness and success inspired us. Otherwise the bar was an ordinary bar, the company an ordinary company, the drink a very ordinary drink. We had all passed the house half a dozen times a day for years, and never once thought of entering it.

"Suppose they were to find out that we had not been to a theatre to-night," said the Merchant, in a stage whisper, looking around suspiciously.

"I don't think they care much about it," replied the Captain, "provided you don't confess it before the crowd outside the door, principally composed of people who would do no good to the house. But finish your glass and come along. There are half a dozen such places between here and supper."

Off we went, and in twenty minutes had stopped at four other specially licensed houses. We walked into two of these without a word. At the other two the farce of having been to the theatre was repeated. Behold us seated, at twenty minutes to one o'clock, before a supper of grilled bones, at a fifth specially licensed house, in a room full of drinkers.

"What do you think of the New Act now?" asked the Author.

"Not a word to say," replied the Merchant, struggling with his bone. "All is happiness and joy."

"There's no great hardship about this," said the Captain.

"Except for our wives. When we were playing cards we had all made up our minds to go home to supper. Now when shall we see a bed?"

"See a bed!" exclaimed the Merchant; "this is seeing life. Why, my dear boy, it's all the fault of the New Act. This is our practical protest against it." The Mer-

chant's voice was loud, and he was in difficulties with his bone.

"It certainly encourages lying," said the Captain. "Why should a man be obliged to say that he has been to a theatre?"

"That's not in the Act. It is one of the stupidities of the police or the landlords. But the police authorities are stupid enough in regard to the theatres without such assistance."

"How so?"

"Why, the Act gives them authority to issue these special licenses, and they have stupidly decided only to license those public-houses which are near the theatres."

"I don't see the stupidity of it. Great numbers of people attend the theatres and are employed at the theatres. When they come out they need something to drink. Hence these specially licensed houses."

"Wait a moment," said the Author. "Don't you know that every theatre is itself a public-house? There is a gallery bar, a pit bar, a saloon for the stalls and dress-circle, waiters to bring refreshments to the private boxes, and a canteen behind the scenes, or a public-house next to the stage-door, for the actors, carpenters, and other employés."

"Quite true," said the Captain. "Didn't think of that."

"Very well. Now, as a rule, every theatre is closed by a little after eleven o'clock. Up to that hour every person in the theatre, auditor or employé, can get as much to eat and drink as he requires at the theatre bars, or at the nearest tavern. From that hour till twelve he can have the run of all the public-houses. Then why license the taverns nearest the theatres to keep open till one for the accommodation of these special classes of people, who are already doubly accommodated?"

"But do you mean to say that you would have no specially licensed houses?" asked the Captain, looking very wise.

"That's not the question. But if I did have any, I would select those which are furthest from the theatres, so that auditors and actors might get their supper beer when they reach home. At present, all the special drinking must be done near the theatres, which already possess special advantages in their refreshment saloons."

At this moment a waiter came to the box, and said, "Ten minutes to one, gentlemen. Any more orders before the bar closes?"

We gave our orders, and the Merchant, speaking very mysteriously, said, "Make it six goes, waiter. Perhaps a friend might drop in."

"All right, sir," replied the waiter, and at eight minutes to one we began our night-caps, an extra nightcap for each being placed in the centre of the table as a reserve? Where were the police? At half-past one we were still talking and drinking, and the extra nightcap was still held in reserve. At a quarter to two we were all sleepy enough to need it, and had quite ceased to care for the New Act.

"Where shall we go now?" asked the Captain, as we rose to leave the specially licensed house.

"Home, sweet home," responded the Merchant, with an attempt at a tune.

"Hush, gentlemen," said the waiter, and hurried us through the hall and ushered us into the street.

It was still raining. On the pavement opposite stood a tall policeman. Coming round the nearest corner was a still taller policeman. The situation was critical.

"We're outflanked," whispered the Captain, recollecting his autumn manoeuvres. "Bow-street and forty shillings to a dead certainty."

"I'll pay the fines," said the Merchant, who is always proudest of his great wealth at two o'clock in the morning. "Come on, I say, you bobby!"

"Cab!" shouted the Author, drowning the Merchant's challenge. The cab came across the street; the tall policemen looked quietly on; and off we drove.

"I say," said the Captain, "those bobbies must have known us. They didn't even ask our names and addresses."

"They'd better not," interposed the Merchant.

"Perhaps they will be satisfied with fining and imprisoning the landlord, and cancelling his license. The New Act is very severe."

"Is it?" contemptuously remarked the Merchant. "This seems to me very like the good old times. Let's go to the club."

"Oh, no! We can do that at any time. Let's go to the Haymarket. I know a place where we can get oysters at all hours," said the Captain.

"Respectable?"

"Well, it's a refreshment place. It isn't disreputable that I ever knew."

"But you can't get any drink there," said the Merchant."

"Can't I?" replied the Captain, laying his finger upon his cigar, which he supposed to be his nose.

"No, it's too risky," the Author interrupted, decidedly. "If you must drink any more, let us go to the club."

"Oh, but clubs are always open. There's no fun in that. Any man who can afford to pay three or four guineas a year subscription need care nothing for the early-closing movement."

"I know a club which is open all night, and the subscription is only sixteen shillings a year. That's cheap enough for a working man—eh?"

"Plenty cheaper than that. Hold on! I say, cabby! Turn to the right about. Now, drive till I tell you to stop. I say," said the Captain, coming in from the cab window, "I know a club where there's no subscription. How do they manage that?"

Nobody could explain, and while we were debating the subject the cab stopped at a small door in a narrow street. The Captain led us up the street and down the street, and finally, when the cab had driven away, we arrived at the same door again. A gentle push and it opened. We entered a small, well-furnished room, and rang a bell. Presently, a waiter appeared and brought the refreshments required. We paid for them and he disappeared. This transaction was repeated at intervals. One or two other customers dropped in. The conversation turned upon the superiority of Brahmaism to the dogmas of Confucius. We were all eloquent. We enjoyed ourselves very much. At four o'clock we descended to the street and again remembered the New Act.

"Subterranean communication with some public-house in the next street?" said the Merchant, looking curiously at the closed door, and speaking with what may be called excessive deliberation.

"Nonsense. Free club. Been there—often," said the Captain, sternly, but jerkily. "Wait! Can't go home. New Act. Arrest man drunk in—own house."

"Not at all. Not at all. Not unless he makes a disturbance. More chance of being arrested drunk outside of your own house. Hi! Cabby!"

A cab and a doze; home and daylight; two gaslights in the hall and a creaky stairs; a cold bath and a Caudle lecture. "But, my love, I have been visiting the public-houses simply to describe them for ALL THE YEAR ROUND."

"Don't tell me, sir! You seem to forget, sir, that, under the New Act, all the public-houses are Closed at Twelve!"

THE DYING TIGER.

I FIRST met the tiger on the Jerome Park racecourse, New York, United States, when I was personally introduced to the royal beast by a menagerie-haunting friend. The Transatlantic tiger was a very fine animal, and appeared only striped as to his nether extremities; indeed, his symmetrical yet powerful shoulders were completely covered by one of those garments that the bucks and bloods of the regency delighted in calling a "white upper Benjamin." The tiger's head was finely formed, and exhibited unmistakable traces of the hairdresser's art; his mouth wore a pleasant smile, and had it not been for an occasional flash of the dark eye, which revealed at once the true nature of the man-eater, I might almost have believed myself in the presence of a thoroughly domesticated—as well as highly-groomed—animal. His paws were singularly beautiful, small, delicate, strangely soft and flexible, and almost covered with immense diamond rings. Jewels of price also adorned his deep chest, and it was pleasing to see that this highly-ornamental creature was by no means entirely carnivorous, inasmuch as he was eating lobster-salad, and taking champagne freely. The tiger was exceedingly amiable, cracked jokes, told stories, and, instead of feeding upon me, fed me upon the very best luncheon I ever ate on a racecourse during the whole course of an ill-spent life, which is saying a good deal.

Moreover, he introduced me to Mrs. Tiger, a very handsome and graceful creature, richly attired in the furry spoils of many wild animals (doubtless captured by the tiger himself), and positively blazing with diamonds. I was most favourably impressed with my first introduction to the feline race, and on being invited to call at the menagerie, accepted the proffered hospitality with effusion. Now the tiger dwelt in Twenty-fifth-street, and his lair consisted of a very handsome house, with an air of great solidity and comfort about it. It was devoid of the pretentious character so common to American houses, which—scorning to retire into modest by-ways, silent lanes, and tranquil nooks—prefer to cling closely to the main road and attract the admiration of the passers-by. An

American house nearly always looks, or tries its best to look, span new, and seems to challenge the spectator's attention in these words: "Lookee here, stranger, take notice, walk up, and observe me carefully; guess you don't see such a sight every day. No, sir-r-r. Here I am, spick and span, glitter and shine, brown stone, paint, glass, and all the modern improvements, just built by that prominent citizen, Nehemiah J. Bunker, Esquire, of Bunkersville, Pa., at the cost of one hundred thousand dollars. Yes, sir-r-r."

I approached the dwelling of the gorgeous animal with some degree of excitement, inasmuch as dark stories were rife as to the fate of those inconsiderate persons who had ventured into the creature's den without good and sufficient escort. These sufferers had, I was told, been stripped not of their flesh and blood indeed, which would have been a severe but endurable calamity, but had been utterly denuded of their money, of all losses the most intolerable. Marching up the tall "stoop," I rang a bell, and was immediately admitted by a black man, who received me in a handsome room furnished in excellent taste, and adorned with a few choice bronzes and fine engravings. A dim religious light pervaded this ante-den, and the apartment was tolerably well filled with gentlemen, whose appearance at least did not betray any traces of disastrous conflict with the mighty monarch of the jungle.

Cigars were being freely smoked by the tiger and his friends, and after a preliminary glass of brandy, the whole company adjourned to the supper-room, where a magnificent repast was laid out. No luxury that daintiness could desire or money purchase was absent from this banquet. Delicious oysters from Blue Point, raw, fried, and stewed, crisp celery from New Jersey, diamond-backed terrapin from the bay of Chesapeake, neat little quail from the corn-fields of the West, tiny rice-birds from the swamps of South Carolina, regal wild turkey from the wilds of Kansas, succulent grouse from the prairies of Illinois, and never-to-be-forgotten canvas-back from the marshes of the Potomac, covered the board of the hospitable tiger, while for the benefit of those who hungered after plainer food, a mighty "Porterhouse" steak exhaled an appetising odour.

Delicious salads and mayonnaises were not absent; champagne corks popped; claret and burgundy were poured forth with a liberal hand. The tiger, seated at the head

of the table, was full of attention towards his guests; the whole entertainment was charmingly complete; and the cookery and waiting perfect.

During this scene of revelry my ears had been, from time to time, assailed by a curious clicking, whirring sound, mingled with an occasional rattle, an ominous sound withal, distantly reminding me of the clash of the Miserere on the ear yet full of the joyous air trilled by Maffio Orsini at that Ferrarese supper, where, as a friend of mine (from Chicago) remarks, "Lucrezia Borgia gets square with that tuneful young patrician." On inquiring the cause of this singular sound, I was informed by my very affable neighbour, a general, and the wearer of the biggest diamond I ever saw upon a man, that the tiger—being an animal of a playful disposition—kept his toys in the next room, and that these were of so interesting a nature that many great men, judges, generals, railroad chiefs, &c., found it almost impossible to let the seductive playthings alone.

On entering the toy-shop I was once more disagreeably reminded of Donizetti's opera by seeing Gubetta dealing a pack of cards playfully enclosed within a silver box, with an open space at the top, against which the pack was held by a spring. Gubetta was slipping off the cards one by one, and was paying and receiving (mostly receiving) the piles of counters cheerfully placed by the visitors to the menagerie on a suite of cards laid out upon the table. It was explained to me that the pack, after being shuffled and cut, was put into the silver box, that the odd numbers in position, as cards one, three, five, seven, &c., won, and that the alternate even numbers, as second, fourth, sixth, and eighth cards lost. The tiger's visitors were anxiously "stacking their pile" on the lay out, or dummy suite on the table, and were trying the eternal systems of gamblers to counter-balance the small but unconquerable percentage of chances in favour of the bank. I was, then, at last in sight of faro, the famous European game of the last century, at which it is reported that the great Scottish financier, James Law, of Bank of France fame and Mississippi notoriety, laid the foundation of his fortune, and by aid of which the excellent Jacques Casanova, Chevalier de Seingalt (by right of invention), kept the pot boiling when no lottery schemes, conjuring, or other tricks, were to the fore. In an almost deserted corner of the toy-shop the revolving wheel and the little

ivory ball were spinning, but did not seem to tempt visitors very much; indeed, considering that, out of twenty-seven chances, the bank reserved to itself two zeros and a spread eagle, the lukewarmness of speculators was not to be wondered at.

The tiger did not meddle with the toys himself, as the noble animal was entirely occupied in receiving the numerous guests who now began to flock in. All these gentlemen fell either upon the supper or upon the wine, brandy, and cigars of the amiable tiger, and seemed to be animated with a laudable desire to take as much out of him as possible. I am bound to admit that—unlimited stimulants to the contrary notwithstanding—the guests of the jungle behaved themselves very well, won without childish exultation, and lost with Spartan fortitude, every man of them “*beau joueur s’il en fust oncques*.” The later the hour the more bland and cheerful waxed the lively tiger, but perhaps this peculiarity may have been due to the well-known nocturnal habits of the great carnivora. Bidding the tiger farewell, I received a hearty shake from his velvet paw—claws retracted as usual—but as I walked towards the Brevoort House, I wondered how much mischief those carefully concealed talons had done in their day, what heart-strings had cracked under their terrible clutch, and what fair lives and blossoming fortunes had been crushed by those beautiful white teeth and square massive jaws.

The *Felis Americanus auratus* will probably exist for some time longer, but in Europe the tiger is on his last legs, and in this realm of England has at length been utterly exterminated. He had enjoyed a pretty good innings, and the remarks thereanent of the ingenuous Mr. Samuel Pepys, under the date of November the 11th, 1661, are quaint enough: “Captain Ferrers carried me, the first time that ever I saw any gaming-house, to one, entering into Lincoln’s-inn-fields, at the end of Bell-yard, where strange the folly of men to lay and lose so much money, and very glad was I to see the manner of a gamester’s life, which I see is very miserable, and poor and unmanly.”

Pepys’s sterner contemporary, Evelyn, writing in 1683, mentions “my lord of St. Albans, now grown so blind that he could not see to take his meat. He has lost immense sums at play, which yet, at about eighty years old, he continues, having one that sits by him to name the spots on the cards.”

And probably but few have forgotten the entry of the same writer on the day when James the Second was proclaimed king, a passage which has inspired one of the finest descriptions in the whole range of English literature. Evelyn says, speaking of the court of the late King Charles the Second: “I can never forget the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming, and all dissoluteness, and, as it were, total forgetfulness of God (it being Sunday evening) which this day se’nnight I was witness of, the king sitting and toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleaveland, and Mazarine, &c., a French boy singing love songs in that glorious gallery, whilst about twenty of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at basset, round a large table, a bank of at least two thousand pounds in gold before them; upon which two gentlemen who were with me made reflections with astonishment. Six days after all was in the dust.”

In the days of my youth the tiger still lurked in London, and, although dislodged from his favourite jungle in St. James’s-street, still retained a well-known lair amid the bamboos of Piccadilly and Albemarle-street. But he was ultimately hunted out (chiefly it is believed through the agency of a Manchester man, into whom he had stuck his claws rather deeply), and was compelled to take refuge on foreign race-courses and other wild spots.

Meanwhile, a tiger of Semitic breed, a rotund, well-fed, jovial animal, defended, with great bravery and pertinacity, his snug retreat in the neat little horse-loving and sausage-producing town of Newmarket. This bland, cheerful old specimen was a great favourite with the patrician frequenters of Newmarket, who were wont to wind up a day spent in horse-racing by “coming up to the scratch” with the favoured animal in his cheerful den. The gay old fellow is still alive, sleek, merry, and glossy in his coat as ever, but his “institution,” as Mark Twain would say, “is dead now.”

A very hard-dying tiger was the tough old fellow who established his cave in the Subscription Rooms at Doncaster during the week sacred to the patron saint of Yorkshire—Saint Leger. This persistent creature hung on tooth and nail with desperate tenacity, and was only destroyed a few months ago. He was a tiger of the rough, unkempt sort, this man-eater of Yorkshire, and did not boast the silky manners of his more aristocratic congeners.

He also omitted the ceremony of fattening up his victims before he struck them. Perhaps the formula was unnecessary, as most of his visitors appeared to have partaken of at least sufficient refreshment before they ventured into his den. No more unlovely scene could well be imagined than the wild-beast show at Doncaster. Huge bull-necked men crowded thickly round the tables; the smoke of countless cigars—mostly of the Houndsditch brand—poisoned the air, already heavily charged with the aroma of Cognac, old Jamaica, and other spirituous liquors, specially prepared for the Doncaster market. "Seven's the main! Seven! Dence-ace! Out!" and like ejaculations, uttered in tones which can only be produced by late hours and bad liquor, rang hoarsely through the unsavoury den. The visitors were mostly attired in the rough garments commonly seen on the racecourse, and, if possible, the manners of the wearers were rougher than their coats.

Never was the pastime facetiously known as "shaking your elbow," pursued under more disagreeable circumstances. The heat was intense; the passion of the gamblers furious, as their bloodshot eyes glared upon the little ivory cubes which bore fortune or misfortune upon their sides.

Conspicuous among the players was a keen-visaged, hawk-eyed man—one of the very few men I have ever seen who seemed to thoroughly enjoy the feverish excitement of play. There was no affectation of calm indifference or sullen endurance in his finely-cut and mobile features, which vibrated at the frowns and smiles of the fickle goddess, as does a veritable Cremona at the touch of a master. Amid the stolid rough-hewn countenances crowded round the table, it was refreshing to see that of one player "par excellence." Another noticeable Doncaster gamester was an old man whose visage was decorated with a nose red enough to serve all men as a beacon to warn them from his acquaintance, and whose hands trembled exceedingly, either from excitement or liquor. This hoary sinner's method of operation was to slowly wriggle the dice out of the box; but he never, so far as I saw, prospered. He threw crabs, took a back hand, and threw aces. He was almost always wrong. I wonder whether the old rascal had a starving wife and family at home, or whether he had commenced life by breaking away from the conventionalities, stealing a horse, and setting up for himself on

the turf. He certainly wore a deep crape hatband; but whether that emblem of mourning was worn in memory of a deceased father (who had cut him off with a shilling), or of a dead wife (who had preferred the grave to the old sinner) I never knew. Possibly it was donned merely to conceal the shabbiness of his beaver; but perhaps the true solution is that he wore his deep hatband merely as a last forlorn clinging to respectability—a last desperate endeavour to impose upon a credulous public the belief that he had once had somebody belonging to him.

But the common wild-beast show did not comprise all the attractions of the tiger of Yorkshire, for there was an inner den sacred against intrusion from any "small deer," and devoted entirely to the greater beasts of chase, such as the mighty stag who proudly tossed his antlered coronet—lord of countless broad acres, and vast forests of sturdy oak and wide-spreading beech. Inferior beings who were by favour permitted to pass the portals of this torture-chamber, stood aghast at seeing the rapid demolition of the big game, their oaks and their beeches, their lands and their beeves, their messuages and tenements, by the omnivorous monster who stood ready to do battle with all comers.

But it is happily all over with the Doncaster tiger; and although a few tiger-cubs may still hover around our racecourses, even they are doomed; their jungles are watched by a careful body of shikarries, and their long cherished hunting-grounds know them no more.

The French tiger, or *Felis Frascatus*, was long since knocked over. He, his suppers, his salons, and his high and mighty game have long since been things of the past. It is true that after the extinction of the royal beast numerous smaller specimens of the same genus lurked in pleasure-loving Paris. But these were small fry, mere tiger-cats, ocelots, or catamounts who preyed mainly on the outskirts of society, picking up the unconsidered waifs and strays, the unfledged gosling, or the silly lame duck. Their lairs were in unfrequented places, and although presenting certain allurements, were powerless to attract the big game which in the golden days of the feline race frequented the numerous luxurious dens of the Palais Royal. They were unlucky too, for when by any slice of good luck they had enticed some noble game within reach of their claws, he was very apt to break loose, make a terrible

noise and smash up the wild cats, den and all.

The *Felis Belgicus* was famous from an early day, and long before the steady-going, home-dwelling tiger became an institution, wandering animals of the same predatory tribe were wont to lurk near the healing springs of Spa. From the days of basset and faro to those of roulette and trente-et-quarante, the pretty little Ardennes village has been the haunt of the feline race. Stately seigneurs, adorned with velvet coats, diamond-hilted swords, and buckles of brilliants, have here been done to death. Fair demoiselles have glided over the promenade resplendent in silks, satins, and jewels of price. The tiger of the period ruffled it in gay attire, wore a watch in each fob, gave splendid entertainments, and made a bank at faro, whereat the fair dames aforesaid thought it no scorn to take a livret. It is delightful to reflect that our dear ancestresses were not stiff or old-fashioned at all, that many a noble lady—tigress in a small way of business—disdained not to set a basset-table for the amusement of her guests, and that Lady Arabella could throw a main with Lord Foppington, upon occasion. The dear creatures were never more pleased than when solacing their ears with the lively rattle of the dice-box. Araminta knew perfectly well the difference between throwing “in” and throwing “out,” and Belinda herself would not have incurred the contempt of Fitz-Boodle by her ignorance of what was the nick to seven. It was by no means uncommon for persons of quality to while away the dull hours of the forenoon with the sounding main, and most readers of old comedy will recollect the horror of the country baronet who finds his family engaged in throwing dice on the very breakfast-table of Lady Loverule.

In one of Sir John Vanbrugh's most sparkling comedies we find the following:

Pray, madam, how do you pass your evenings?

Like a woman of spirit, sir, a great spirit. Give me a box and dice. Seven's the main! Oons! sir, I set you a hundred pound! Why, do you think women are married now-a-days to sit at home and mend napkins? Sir, we have nobler ways of passing time.

The idleness of a fashionable watering-place naturally afforded plenty of opportunity for the indulgence of speculative tastes, and ultimately the tiger seized upon such places, entered in, dwelt in them, and has during many years found his account therein, for since the moment when he first discovered the value of mineral waters to the feline constitution it has never been

possible to keep him away from medicinal springs. He is drawn to them by some invincible attraction, and is never so happy, so sleek, and so glossy, as when basking on the sunny slopes of the Taunus, or rolling sportively by the banks of the sparkling Oos. Indeed, during the present century, the German tiger has assumed immense proportions, and whatever his treatment of chance comers to the menagerie, has always kept his claws out of the inhabitants of neighbouring villages.

For a long time he enjoyed himself among the anti-rheumatic baths of Aix-la-Chapelle, but the hunters were upon his track, and ousted the Prussian tiger, who was driven to seek “fresh woods and pastures new” amid the laughing vineyards of the Rhine and the narrow valley of the Lahn. At Wiesbaden, especially, he built himself a magnificent den in a charming country, albeit over-hot in summer, and wondrously infested by wasps. Originally there were three grand entrances to the Kursaal at Wiesbaden, and these provoked from some Frenchman who had lost his money the following epigram:

*Il y a trois portes à cet antre,
L'espérance, l'infamie et la mort.
C'est par la première qu'on entre
C'est par les autres qu'on sort.*

Let us see the show.

Men, aye, and women, of all nations, stream ceaselessly in and out of these famous entrances, but the demeanour of the comers is very different to that of the goers. A light springy step and a jaunty air often accompany the new arrival burning to see the tiger, perhaps for the first time, or perhaps to renew so agreeable an acquaintance; but a certain listlessness pervades most of those who are leaving the den. They have seen the show. They have crowded up close to the bars. They have—some of them who were rich enough—caused the animal to be stirred up with a long pole, and have suffered accordingly. Young Buffington, son of the great house of Binks and Buffington, looks very sad indeed; the cash which should have taken him to Constantinople, Jerusalem, Cairo, the Pyramids, and the Nile, has been, as Buffington junior mournfully expresses it, “blued.” The tiger has gotten the better of B. junior, whose mind will not this season be improved by the advantages of Eastern travel. M. Alcide de Châteaudun is also savage and biting his moustache, savagely curses himself as an “animal” for missing the last run upon the red. Titus J. Danks, Esquire, of Succotash City,

senator from the state of Arizona, takes matters more coolly, and does not seem to labour under more than the weight of care which ordinarily oppresses him. He has "fit" the tiger before now down in Sacramento City, and has played monte when the bankers never dealt without a loaded six-shooter at the side of the pack. This prominent citizen retires pensively to his hotel, where, among the seventeen or so huge Saratoga trunks which form the baggage of himself and wife, lie concealed many bottles of rare old Bourbon, accompanied by Angostura bitters and other "fixings." Fortified by these Homeric stimulants, the senator will return again to the charge, although it is more than doubtful whether an accurate knowledge of all the most recondite mysteries of seven-up, euchre, bluff, draw-poker, and faro will enable him to cope successfully at roulette or trente-et-quarante with the tiger of Wiesbaden.

Near to Frankfort-on-the-Main, and almost under the shadow of that New Jerusalem, a tiger of immense size and dazzling splendour established a show which immediately became popular.

This liberal, open-pawed creature did not wish to devour his clients all at once, preferring rather to consume them piecemeal or by instalments. He advertised largely, and offered unusual advantages to the visitors of his exhibition. At the moment of the arrival of the tiger, Homburg was a trumpery village, inhabited only by some very "ordinary" aborigines, and a few German families of distinction who came to drink from the medicinal springs. But the wild-beast show soon converted the retired village of the Taunus into a pretty town, well paved and lighted with gas; excellent roads were made in all directions; capital hotels and comfortable lodging-houses abounded; the centre of the whole being the magnificent palace of the tiger himself. The visitors to this famous zoological garden were of a very mixed character—mostly bad—but it was always amusing to watch the coolness with which English people threw insular prejudices to the winds, and fell in with the doubtful manners and detestable customs of the place. I have seen English families of the most severe respectability—when at home—become suddenly infected, male and female, with the dominant passion of the spot. They could not let the tiger alone; they even went to the length of beginning to worry him in the morning, when the beast is especially

dangerous; they patted him, they fondled him, they rubbed his silky ears, admired his beautiful paws, and gathering courage from familiarity, boldly pulled his tail. They were his easiest victims. Playing in an off-hand careless way, they hardly ever won anything, and sometimes lost a great deal.

Occasionally, indeed, the tiger met with a foeman worthy of his fangs. I have seen a stern encounter between the tiger and a mighty Russian bear, wherein the tiger was terribly mauled; and only during the past year a Sicilian gentleman proved a tough morsel, and damaged the tiger severely.

But in spite of the beauty and popularity of Homburg, I cannot help thinking Baden-Baden (the chiefest booth of Vanity Fair) the most delightful haunt ever selected by the feline race. Overpowering, indeed, is the natural beauty of the spot, and most delightful the society which has been wont to assemble there. The tiger, too, was not so constantly before the eye as in Homburg, where he filled the entire place, leaving no particle of room for anybody else. It was all tiger at Homburg, whereas at Baden that interesting animal appeared more as an incident than as the final cause of the booth and everything in it.

There was an amusing pretence of taking mineral waters at Baden, but I never met anybody there who had tasted them; and, indeed, found on inquiry that all visitors to Baden were tolerably robust invalids. The feminine element was very strong at the Baden tables, and it was interesting to some students of human nature to watch the fair sex struggling with the tiger. The fair combatants were sometimes happy in their inspirations, but in the long run generally suffered defeat, leaving their rings, their chains, and their jewels on the claws of their terrible opponent. Ancient princesses and antiquated countesses hovered about Ems and Homburg, but none of these old harpies, who had become lean, aged, and haggard in the protracted combat with the tiger, put in an appearance at Baden-Baden.

There everybody lost, and looked pleasant, following the American advice to the loser of a bet to "own up, pay up, and shut up." Sufferers from the tiger's claws did shut up themselves and their boxes, and take the next train, oftentimes second class, for Paris. Not that the monarch of Baden was an inhospitable beast by any means, for when you were stripped to the bone he would kindly supply sufficient funds to

convey your skeleton to the family vault of your ancestors. His reason for this was, of course, plain enough; he did not want his den whitened with the bones of his victims, and so shipped you off on the same principle that gentlemen of the medical profession adopt when they send you to Nice or to Mentone in order to keep your gravestone out of their neighbourhood. But the German tiger is doomed to the fate of his French and English brethren, and the year of grace, 1873, will see the world well rid of him. A reign of blood and iron could not endure the presence of the jungle king, and Bismarck has condemned him to extermination.

The last representative of the European race of tigers continues to drag on a precarious existence in the old pirate stronghold of Monaco, but his days are numbered; neither gods, men, nor the columns of newspapers will much longer endure his existence, and though he will cling with all the strength of fangs and claws to his last Mediterranean retreat, he will soon be disposed of, and the European tiger will become as much a thing of the past as the cave bear, the mammoth, the mastodon, the iguanodon, or any other of those monsters which are now fortunately extinct.

THE CUPBOARD PAPERS.

VII. THE CUPBOARD IN THE HONEYMOON.

ON the 15th of August, 1835, Mr. Walker wrote in *The Original*: "The greatest evils, perhaps, under which the lower classes labour, arise from ignorance of domestic economy. It is certainly below the mark to say that, on an average, labourers' families might live much better than they now do, for one-third less expense. Waste and uncomfot are but too often the chief characteristics of their management—the bitter consequences of which are strife, sickness, debt, misery, recklessness, and crime. Their purchases are often bad in quality, small in quantity, and high in price; their meals wasteful and unwholesome; their clothes neglected, and everything about them destitute of arrangement. There are many causes which conspire to keep up this state of things. First, the want of efficient local government, having for its basis moral influence. The majority of mankind are, as it were, out of the pale of systematic discipline, and it is marvellous that their neglected state is not productive of worse consequences to themselves and the rest of the world. Secondly, the means which are adopted to remedy

the evils of neglect, only tend in principle to aggravate and perpetuate them; and the endless institutions, miscalled charitable, with which the land is covered, by furnishing so many substitutes for prudence, diminish the necessity for prudence itself, and, in defiance of morals and religion, reduce human beings below the standard of their nature."

I should like to point out a few of the reasons, which have occurred to me at different times and in various places, why the Swiss, the German, and the French mechanics or labourers are better off than their English brothers; and in the course of the inquiry we shall find that the causes of English hardships and vices were truly stated by Mr. Walker some thirty-seven years ago.

"Monsieur," said my cook to me one morning, "I am going to be married."

"Celestine," I replied, "if your future husband is a saving, sober, even-tempered man, and is in a position to keep you comfortably, I congratulate you; although we shall be sorry to lose you."

"Monsieur is too good," she continued. "But I should not have ventured to intrude on his time, if madame had not authorised me to consult monsieur on a little investment I want to arrange. My money is in Municipals; would monsieur advise me to turn it into Rentes?"

Celestine had been saving steadily for some twelve years; wearing plain white caps and aprons, and the gowns of her class; never indulging in an approach to finery; and all with a view to a comfortable and prudent marriage in the end. Antoine, her betrothed, had, we suspected, an eye upon Celestine's dôt; but this was natural. Antoine would never dream of marrying a woman who could not bring something towards the home, and he himself had waited to his thirtieth year before offering himself as an eligible match. In all such cases money-matters are considered with as much care and foresight as a duke bestows on the settlement of his daughter. My concierge, explaining to me the thrift with which he was compelled to live (his wife was mixing a delicious winter salad in the background while he talked) said, "You see, monsieur, we have to save a dowry for our little girl." A neighbour had two Alsaciennes in his service, who, with a third sister in another place, were all saving their money to buy land and a house in their pays—their pays alas! no longer. A *femme de menage* who came to my establishment, for two francs a day, was in despair when the Mexican

empire collapsed—for she had investments, she told me, weeping bitterly, in the Mexicans. But this is the common story among the working classes in France. The thrift is severe. When Celestine had finished her day's work she knitted stockings. It was with pride she told over the dozen pair of black worsted hose she had for work-days, and an equal number of white for Sundays and fête-days. Her linen was in extraordinary quantities, all spun by her own fingers. Look at the stall-women in the streets; the poissarde gazing seaward for her Ulysses, who will presently come to her arms, fish-scales and all; the gossips at street corners; the women minding little shops—they have flashing knitting-needles in their hands. Did you ever see knitting-needles in the hands of an English poor man's wife? When the stockings are old, can Mrs. Jones knit new feet to them? When her child marries, can she even furnish a poor home for her flesh and blood? Has she the command of a few weeks' wages in advance; and can she, out of this hoard, buy at a favourable moment in the cheapest market? Compare Celestine with Mary Anne, and you will soon come at the reason why the English working-folk lapse into pauperism, directly their wage ceases. Domestic economy forsooth! A domestic scramble at the best is the English house-keeping, when compared with the thrift and order of most of the continental societies; and it is hardly possible to say that matters have mended in one particular since Mr. Walker wrote *The Original*.

Consider that the following was written in 1835, and that we are still somewhere very near where we were then. "Good training is alone education, and it is not enough to teach only those things which are good or bad, as they are used. A woman does not necessarily make a better helpmate to a labouring man because she can read and write; but it is otherwise if she has been taught the domestic arts of life suitable to her condition. Both are desirable, but the latter are indispensable to happiness, and they are lamentably neglected. . . . There is no class of persons to whom domestic comfort is of so much importance, as to those who have to earn their livelihood by hard labour, and there is no greater contrast than that between a well-ordered and a cheerless home. In the one case, when the husband returns from his work he finds a kindly woman, a cheerful fire, quiet children, as good a meal as his means will allow ready prepared, every want anticipated, every habit attended to, an universal

neatness, and everything in its place." The picture is a pretty one for a "goody." It is not a common scene in England, however, albeit many years have passed since the preacher lifted his voice. But the value of it may be tested by any member of a School Board who will be at the pains of travelling through the villages of Belgium, Switzerland, France, and Germany. He will find his best examples in France, however; since here, combined with an innate love of domestic order, there is more taste than in Germany, or Switzerland. Out of a given wage earned by the husband, the wife can offer a better table, and a more pleasing arrangement of the home rooms. She has had exactly the domestic education which Mr. Walker very properly puts before reading and writing. My Celestine, to take an instance, could neither read nor write; yet she could make her market with the keenest of her profession; was mistress of all the arts of thrift, and could even invest her savings with discernment.

To many of us there is something shocking in the business-like airs with which French people contract alliances; but, among the poorer population, at any rate, the calculation, foresight, deliberate preparation of a home, and arrangement of the means of supporting it, mean life-long comfort, each of the contracting parties having a due regulated share of the duties to perform. The only bit of extravagance is the wedding dinner, followed by a ball. In a couple of days the duties of life are taken up, and the wife is busy with her linen and her saucepans. Mr. Walker describes marriage among English farm labourers: "Women, brought up in ignorance of comfort, of course are careless about the means of providing for it. They are heedless how they marry, and, when married, never think of the duties of their situation. I recollect a young woman, the wife of a labourer in the country, once applying to me respecting some alleged harsh treatment on the part of a shopkeeper, to whom she owed money. On investigating the case, I found that she regularly spent three shillings a week in sweet things, and that she held herself entitled to pass the first year after her marriage in complete idleness, a privilege, I discovered, by no means seldom claimed. Of course, the habits of the first year would become, in a great measure, the habits of after life, and the indulgence in sweet things would most likely be transferred in time to things less harmless."

When Celestine married her Antoine, who was a railway porter, she begged that she might return to my service for the few months she had to remain in Paris, before leaving for Italy, where her bridegroom had effected an excellent engagement that would keep the pair in comfort. She pleaded that in this way she would not have to draw on her resources, all of which would be wanted for her installation in her new home. She was very proud, at the same time, to beg that my family would taste the wine of her husband's village, grown on the bit of land belonging to his family, in which he had a share. So the Paris railway porter was an infinitely small wine grower in his native place; and the desire of his life was to earn money in "the capital of the world" to carry back to the little property. In marriage he looked for a wife who would husband his resources, and, at the same time, add to them. I leave others to moralise and sentimentalise on the subject, I give the facts as they come under my eyes, and if I dwell upon them, it is because they appear to me to be very near the foundation of the difference there is between the domestic and social predicaments of the wage-earning classes of England and France. Celestine could turn every liard of the family income to the best account; could make a thoroughly good dinner out of the slightest and cheapest materials, could knit her husband's hose, and spin the flax for his linen while the pot-au-feu was bubbling within ear-shot; and having cultivated the habit of saving all her life, and being among saving people, could invest intelligently. Let the reader not run away with the idea that my old cook and the railway porter will ever become rich people. They are thinking only of their old days, and of a crust of bread to leave to their children. They will never move out of the class in which they were born. But the comforts of their degree they will command when they are old. They will grow their own wine and vegetables, rear their own pork and poultry, keep their own cow, and be able to give a *vin d'honneur* any day to the friend who may pass their way. And Celestine's is the every-day marriage of the French working classes.

Mr. Walker, whom I take to be the fairest exponent we have yet had of the weak places in the condition of the English agricultural labourer, and, indeed, of all English workers, says: "I will conclude my observations with enumerating a few particulars which appear to me to be most worthy of atten-

tion, and others will no doubt occur to those who turn their minds to the subject. In my intercourse with the labouring classes, what I have observed they seem most to want to learn, is to market and make purchases on the most advantageous terms; to apply the arts of cookery to preparing food in an economical, wholesome, and palatable manner; in the country to brew and bake; to light a fire expeditiously and economically; to keep up a fire economically; to make a fire cheerful expeditiously; to set out a table quickly and neatly; to clear away expeditiously; to cut out, make, and mend linen, and to keep other clothes in good order; to wash and get up linen; to dry and clean shoes; to sweep and clean rooms quietly and expeditiously, and to keep them neat and comfortable; and, lastly, to prepare proper food for children and the sick. The difference in the way of doing these things, as far as my observation could go, is immense; and the difference in point of comfort corresponding."

The picture of the rearing of a family in the English agricultural districts which follows—its sad beginning and hopeless end—is but a companion canvas to that which has been drawn of late by special peripatetic philosophers of the daily papers. Mary Anne is very like her grandmother; the same ignorant, sad-hearted, helpless, slatternly creature, with not a thought beyond weak tea, green bacon, greens, with vinegar, by way of sauce, a bit of beef on holidays, and small beer. I sent some Australian meat to some cottages near my "little place in Surrey," having heard that the husband, a waggoner, had broken his leg, and that there was not, as usual, a penny in hand. A few days later, Petit Bec heard (he hears everything) that they had put the meat in the pig-tub, and had schemed a bit of beef at the butcher's. The wife could do nothing with the wholesome Australian mutton, but sat helpless in the cottage, with not a single resource at her command. She and her good man had married without troubling themselves about the future. The cupboard, within the circling of the honeymoon, was as bare as it was when the accident befel the husband, and there were four children whimpering before its empty shelves.

The fundamental difference between the lot of Celestine and her railway guard, and Mary Anne and her good man, as they start together, is that between a providence that has become second nature, and an improvidence that is not shocking or fearful to

the couple because it is everywhere the rule. Mary Anne's children will probably grow up as shiftless and improvident as she is. Celestine will begin to shape the course of her children directly she lifts them for the last time from the go-cart. They will never be dressed in tawdry finery, imitating their betters. Little Celestine will wear a little white cap and cotton frocks, and very thick shoes, and will be clean always; but she will never be tricked out in imitation of the children of fortune, who skip and play hide-and-seek in the Infants' Alley of the Tuileries gardens. A marriage portion will grow with her growth. Her brother will have his life parcelled out for him, will be apprenticed, and watched over through his dangerous years; and, when mother and father die, brother and sister will inherit, not fortunes that will enable them to live thenceforth in idleness, but goods and chattels, and money, and a little land, that will lighten their life with hope, and strength, and comfort while they work, and keep them independent, and of tranquil mind, should they fall sick.

THE YELLOW FLAG.

BY EDMUND YATES,

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "NOBODY'S FORTUNE," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER VIII. HAGAR'S VISIT.

IN the house in Great Walpole-street there was little change. Things went on in pretty much the same manner as when John Calverley had been in the habit of creeping back to his dismal home with sorrow in his heart, or when Pauline sat watching and plotting in the solitude of her chamber. Since her second husband's death, Mrs. Calverley seemed to have eschewed even the small amount of society which she had previously kept; the heavy dinner-parties were given up, and the only signs of so-called social intercourse were the fortnightly meetings of a Dorcas club, which was held under Mrs. Calverley's auspices, and at which several elderly ladies of the neighbourhood discussed tea and scandal under the pretence of administering to the necessities of the poor. At other times, the mistress of the house led a life which was eminently solitary and self-contained. She read occasionally, it is true; but when she called at the circulating library, she brought away with her, for her amusement or edification, no story in which, under the guise of fiction, the writer had endeavoured to portray any of

the varieties of shifting human nature which had come beneath his ken; no poem glowing with passion and ardour, or sweetly musical with melodious numbers. Hard, strong books of travel through districts with immense unpronounceable names; tales of missionary enterprise set forth in the coldest, baldest, and least-educated style; polemical discussions on religious questions, and priestly biographies; lives of small men, containing no proper precept, setting no worthy example—these were Mrs. Calverley's favourite reading. The butler declared that she read nothing at all; that, though these books were brought home on the back seat of the carriage, and were afterwards displayed on the drawing-room table, one at a time occupying the post of honour on his mistress's lap, she never so much as glanced at them, but sat staring with her steely blue eyes straight in front of her; a state of things which afflicted the butler, on his own statement, with a disease known to him as "the creeps," and which was considered generally so uncanny throughout the lower regions, that had not the wages been good and the table liberal, the whole household would have departed in a body.

About four o'clock on a dull afternoon in the very early spring, Mrs. Calverley was seated in her drawing-room in that semi-comatose state which inspired her domestics with so much terror. Some excuse, however, was to be made for her not attempting, on the present occasion, to read the book which lay idly in her lap, the time being "between the lights," as the phrase goes, when the gathering gloom of evening, aided by the ever-present thickness of the London atmosphere, blots out the sun's departing rays before the time recorded in the almanack. It was very seldom, indeed, that Mrs. Calverley suffered her thoughts to dwell upon any incident of her immediately passed life. On what had happened during her girlhood, when she was a spoiled and petted heiress, on certain episodes in the career of jolly George Gurwood, her first husband, in which she had borne a conspicuous part, she was in the habit of bestowing occasional remembrance; but all that concerned her later life she wilfully and deliberately shut out from her mind. It chanced, however, that, upon this particular day, the deceased John Calverley had been frequently present to his widow's recollection. There was nothing extraordinary in this; it arose from the fact that that very morning, in looking through the contents of

an old trunk which had long since been consigned to the lumber-room, Mrs. Calverley had come upon an old fly-blown water-colour drawing of a youth with a falling linen collar, a round jacket, and white-duck trousers, a drawing which bore some faint general resemblance to John even as she remembered him. Pondering over this work of art in a dreamy fashion, Mrs. Calverley found herself wondering whether her late husband's mental condition in youth had been as frank and ingenuous as that to be gathered from his physical portrait; and, secondly, whether she had not either faultily misapprehended or wilfully misconstrued that mental and moral condition even during the time that she had been acquainted with him. Two or three times later in the day her mind had wandered to the same topic, and now, as she sat in the dull drawing-room in the failing light, her thoughts were full of him. It was pleasant, she remembered, though she had not thought so at the time, to be looking forward in expectation of his return home at a certain hour; pleasant to know that he would probably be detained beyond the appointed time, thereby giving her opportunity for complaint; pleasant to have some one to vent her annoyance upon who would feel it so keenly, and reply to it so little. She had not hitherto looked at her loss from this point of view, and she was much struck by the novelty of it; though she had never had any opinion of Mr. Calverley, she was willing to admit that he was not absolutely bad-hearted; nay, there were times when—

Her reverie was interrupted by the entrance of the butler, who announced that a young lady was below desiring to speak to Mrs. Calverley.

"A lady! What kind of a lady?"

"A—a widow, mum," replied the butler, pointing in an imbecile way, first at Mrs. Calverley's cap, and then at his own head.

"Ah," said Mrs. Calverley, with a deep groan, and shaking her head to and fro—for she never missed an opportunity of making capital out of her condition before the servants—"one who has known grief, eh, James? And she wants to see me?"

"Asked first if you lived here, mum, and then was very particular in wishing to see you. A pleasant-spoken young woman, mum, and not like any begging-letter impostor, or coves—or people I mean—of that sort."

"You can light the gas, James, and then show the lady up. No, stay; show her up at once, and do not light the gas until I ring."

Since she had known Madame Du Tertre, Mrs. Calverley had taken some interest in her own personal appearance, and not having seen her toilet-glass since the morning, she had an idea that she might have become somewhat dishevelled.

The butler left the room, and presently returned, ushering in a lady who, so far as Mrs. Calverley could make out in the uncertain light, was young, of middle height, and dressed in deep mourning.

The mistress of the mansion motioned her visitor to a seat, and making her a stiff bow, said, "You wish to speak to me, I believe?"

"I wish to speak with Mrs. Calverley."

"I am Mrs. Calverley. What is your business?"

"Your—your husband died recently?"

"About six months ago. How very curious! What is your object in asking these questions?"

"Bear with me, pray! Do not think me odd; only answer me what I ask you; my reasons for wishing you to do so are so urgent."

The lady's voice was agitated, her manner eager and unusual. Mrs. Calverley did not quite know what to make of her visitor. She might be a maniac; but then why was she interested in the deceased Mr. Calverley? Another explanation of that mystery arose in Mrs. Calverley's mind. Who was this hussy who was so inquisitive about other women's husbands? She should like to see what the bold-faced thing looked like. And she promptly rang the bell to summon James to light the gas.

"You will answer me, will you not?" said the pleasing voice.

"It depends upon what you ask," replied Mrs. Calverley, with a smile.

"Tell me, then—Mr. Calverley—your husband—was he very fond of you?"

The few scattered bristles which did duty as Mrs. Calverley's eyebrows rose half an inch nearer her forehead with astonishment.

"Yes," she replied, after a moment's reflection, "of course he was—devoted."

Something like a groan escaped from the stranger.

"And you—you loved him?"

"Very much in the same way," said Mrs. Calverley, feeling herself for the first time in her life imbued with a certain grim humour—"quite devoted to him."

"Yes," said the visitor, sadly, "that I can fully understand. Did you ever see or hear of his partner, Mr. Claxton?"

"I never saw him," said Mrs. Calverley. "I've heard of him often enough, oftener

than I like. It was he that persuaded Mr. Calverley to going into that speculation about those ironworks which Mr. Jeffreys can make nothing of. But he wasn't a partner in the house; there are no partners in the house—only some one that Mr. Calverley knew in the City, and probably a designing swindler, for Mr. Calverley was a weak man, and this Claxton——”

“Mr. Claxton was the best man that ever walked this earth!” cried Alice, breaking forth, “the kindest, the dearest, and the best.”

“Heyday,” cried Mrs. Calverley, with a snort of defiance. “And who may you be, who know so much about Mr. Claxton, and who want to know so much about Mr. Calverley?”

“That is right, James,” she added, “light the gas, and then,” she said, in a lower tone, “I shall be better able to judge the kind of visitor I have.”

The gas was lighted and the servant left the room; Mrs. Calverley rose stiffly from her chair and advanced towards Alice, who remained seated.

“What is this,” she said, in a strong voice, “and who are you, coming here tricked out in these weeds to make inquiries, and to utter sentiments at which modest women would blush? Who are you, I say?”

But while Mrs. Calverley had been speaking Alice had looked up, and her eyes had fallen upon a picture hanging against the wall. A big crayon head of John, her own old John, just as she had known him, with the large bright eyes, the heavy, thoughtful brow, and the lines round the mouth somewhat deeply graven. For an instant she bent her head before the picture, the next, with the tears welling up into her eyes, and in a low soft voice, without the slightest exaggeration in tone or manner, she said: “You ask me who I am, and I will tell you!” Then pointing up to the portrait, “I am that man's widow!”

“What!” screamed Mrs. Calverley. “Do you know who that was?”

“No,” said Alice, “except that he was my husband.”

“Why, woman!” exclaimed the outraged mistress of the house, in a torrent of rage, “that was Mr. Calverley!”

“I know nothing,” said Alice, “save that in the sight of Heaven, he was my husband. Call him by what name you will, he had neither lot nor part with you. You tell me that he loved you, was devoted to you—it is a lie! You talk of your love for him, and that may be indeed, for he was meant to be loved! But he was mine, all mine—ah,

my dear John! ah, my darling old John!” She broke down utterly here, and fell on her knees before the picture in a flood of tears.

“Well, upon my word,” cried Mrs. Calverley, “this is a little too much! No one who knew Mr. Calverley, selfish and neglectful as he was, and without the least consideration for me, would suspect him to have been such a Bluebeard or a Mormon as you endeavour to make him out! How dare you come here with a tale like this! How dare you present yourself before me with your brazen face and your well-prepared story, unless it is, as I suppose, to induce me to give you hush-money to stop your mouth! Do you imagine for an instant that I am to be taken in by such a ridiculous plot? Do you imagine for an instant that——”

She stopped, for there was a sound of voices outside, and the next moment the door opened and Martin Gurwood, closely followed by Humphrey Statham, entered the room.

Mrs. Calverley dropped the arm which she had extended in monition, and Alice ran to place herself by Martin Gurwood's side.

“Save me from her!” she cried, shrinking on his arm. “Save me from this woman!”

“Do not be afraid, Alice,” said Martin, endeavouring to calm her. “We thought to find you here, but hoped to be in time to prevent your suffering any annoyance. Mother,” he added turning to Mrs. Calverley, “there is some mistake here.”

“There must be some mistake, indeed,” observed Mrs. Calverley, with great asperity, “when I find my son, a clergyman of the Church of England, taking part against his mother with a woman who, take the most charitable view of it, is only fitted for Colney Hatch Lunatic Asylum.”

“Not to take part against you, mother! Surely——”

“Well, I don't know what you call it,” cried Mrs. Calverley, “or whether you consider it quite decorous to keep your arm round that young person before your mother's face! Or whether”—here the worthy lady gave a short nod towards Statham—“gentlemen with whom I have but slight personal acquaintance think themselves justified in coming into my house uninvited! I am an old-fashioned person, and I dare say don't understand these matters, but in my time they would not have been tolerated.”

“See, dear mother,” said Martin, quietly, “you do us all, and more especially this lady, great injustice!”

"Oh, very likely," said Mrs. Calverley, sarcastically; "very likely she is right and I am wrong! She has just told me that she was Mr. Calverley's wife, and no doubt you will bear out that that is correct, and that I have been dreaming for the last twelve years."

"If you will permit me to speak, madam," said Humphrey Statham in his deep tones, "I think I can prove to you that this lady has, or imagined she has, grounds for the statement which she has made, and that while you have been deeply injured, her injuries are worse, and more serious than yours."

"You will hear Mr. Statham, if you please, mother," said Martin Gurwood; "I am here to attest the truth of all that he will say."

And then, with homely natural eloquence springing from the depth of his feeling, Humphrey Statham told, in nervous, unadorned language, the story of the betrayal of the woman whom he loved. On the dead man's perfidy he dwelt as lightly as he could, more lightly still on the probable causes which had induced the dead man to waver in his faith, and to desert the home which had been rendered so unattractive to him; but he spoke earnestly and manfully of the irremediable wrong done to Alice, and of the manner in which her life had been sacrificed; and, finally, he produced the document in John Calverley's handwriting, which had just been discovered, to show how completely she had been made the victim of a fraud.

Sitting bolt upright on her chair, and slowly rubbing her withered hands one over the other, Mrs. Calverley listened to Statham's speech. When he stopped she bridled up and said with asperity, "A very pretty story indeed; very well concocted and arranged between you all. Of course, I may believe as much of it as I choose! There's no law, I imagine, to compel me to swallow it whole, even though my son, a clergyman of the Church of England, sits by and nods his head in confirmation of his friend. And don't imagine, please, that I am at all surprised at what I hear about Mr. Calverley! I hear it now for the first time, but I always imagined him to be a bad and wicked man, given up to selfishness and debauchery, and quite without the power of appreciating the blessings of a well-ordered home. The young woman needn't start! I am not

going to demean myself by engaging in any controversy with her, and wish rather to ignore her presence. But I will say," said Mrs. Calverley, drawing herself up, "but I will say that I had not expected to find that my son was sanctioning these proceedings, and conniving at the disgrace which was being heaped upon me!"

"Mother!" cried Martin Gurwood, appealingly.

"It might," continued Mrs. Calverley, with great placidity, "it might have been imagined that, as my son, and leaving out all question of his clerical position, he would have adopted another course, but such do not appear to have been his views. Let me tell him," she cried, turning upon Martin with sudden fierceness, "that henceforward he is no son of mine! That I renounce him and leave him to shift for himself; he has no longer any expectations from me! On certain conditions I promised to share all with him now, and leave him my sole heir at my death. But I revoke what I said; I am mistress of my own fortune, and will continue to be so. Not one penny of it shall go to him."

"You are of course at liberty to do what you like with your fortune, mother," said Martin, quietly, "and it would never occur to me for an instant——"

"Stay!" interrupted Statham, taking his friend by the arm and pointing to Alice, "there is no use in prolonging this painful discussion, and Mrs. Claxton is completely exhausted."

"You are right," said Martin, rising from his seat; "we have been somewhat thoughtless in thus overtaxing her strength, and will take her home at once!" Then advancing, he said, in a low tone, "Mother, will you see me to-morrow?"

"Mr. Martin Gurwood," said Mrs. Calverley, in a clear, cold voice, "with my own free will I will never look upon you again! And though the name that I bear is that of one who was a scoundrel, I am glad that it is not the name which is disgraced by you!"

And thus those two parted.

Early in December will be published the
EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER
FOR CHRISTMAS,-
1872.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 209. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1872.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BORN AND THE BORN"

CHAPTER XXI. THE PATIENT AT PLAS YLWD.

I got home just as the last broad beam of the setting sun was spent, and twilight overspread churchyard and manor-house, sea and land, with its grey mantle. Lights were gleaming from the drawing-room window as I approached; a very welcome light to me, for it told me that Laura Grey had come down, and I was longing to tell her my story.

I found her, as I expected, seated quietly at our tea-table, and saw, in her surprised and eager looks, how much she was struck by the excitement which mine exhibited; as without waiting to take off my hat or coat, I called on her to listen, and stumbled and hurried through the opening of my strange story.

I had hardly mentioned the sudden appearance of Mr. Marston, when Laura Grey rose with her hands clasped: "Was any one shot? for God's sake tell me quickly."

I described all I had seen. She pressed her hands hard to her heart.

"Oh! he has killed him; the villain! His threats are always true—his promises never. Oh! Ethel, darling, he has been so near me, and I never dreamed it."

"Who? What is it, Laura? Don't, darling, be so frightened; he's not killed—nobody's killed; I dare say it is very trifling, and Doctor Mervyn is with him by this time."

"I am sure he's badly wounded; he has killed him. He has hated him so long, he would never have left him till he had killed him."

She was growing quite distracted; I, all the time, doing my utmost to reassure her.

"What is his name?" at length I asked. The question seemed to quiet her. She looked at me, and then down; and then again at me.

Once or twice she had mentioned a brother, whom she loved very much, and who was one of her great anxieties. Was this wounded man he? If not, was he a lover? This latter could hardly be; for she had once, after a long, laughing fencing with my close questions, told me suddenly, quite gravely, that she had no lover, and no admirer, except one whom she despised and disliked as much as she could any one on earth. It was very possible that her brother was in debt, or in some other trouble, that made her, for the present, object to disclose anything about him. I thought she was going to tell me a great deal now; but I was disappointed. I was again put off; but I knew she spoke truth, for she was the truest person I ever met, when she said that she longed to tell me all her story, and that the time would soon come when she could. But now, poor thing! she was, in spite of all I could say, in a state, very nearly, of distraction. She never was coherent, except when, in answer to her constantly repeated questioning, I again and again described the appearance of the wounded man, which each time seemed to satisfy her on the point of identity, but without preventing her from renewing her inquiries with increasing detail.

That evening passed miserably enough for us both. Doctor Mervyn, on his way to his patient, looked in upon us early next morning, intent on learning all he could from me about the circumstances of the discovery of his patient. I had been too well drilled by prudent old Rebecca Tor-kill, to volunteer any information respect-

ing the unexpected appearance of Mr. Marston so suspiciously near the scene of the occurrence. I described, therefore, simply the spectacle presented by the wounded man, on my lighting upon him in the wood, and his removal to the farm-house of Plas Ylwd.

"It's all very fine, saying it was an accident," said the doctor, with a knowing nod and a smile. "Accident, indeed! If it was, why should he refuse to say who had a hand in the accident, beside himself? But there's no need to make a secret of the matter, for unless something unexpected should occur, he must, in the ordinary course of things, be well in little more than a week. It's an odd wound. The ball struck the collar-bone and broke it, glancing upward. If it had penetrated obliquely downward instead, it might have killed him on the spot."

"Do you know his name?" I inquired.

"No; he's very reserved; fellows in his situation often are; they don't like figuring in the papers, you understand; or being bound over to be of good behaviour; or, possibly, prosecuted. But no trouble will come of this; and he'll be on his legs again in a very few days."

With this reassuring news the doctor left us. Miss Grey was relieved. One thing seemed pretty certain; and that was, that the guilty and victorious duellist would not venture to appear in our part of the world for some time to come.

"Will you come with me, to-day, to ask how he gets on?" I said to Laura as soon as the doctor was gone.

"No, I can't do that; but it would be very kind of you: that is, if you have no objection."

"None in the world; we must get Rebecca to make broth, or whatever else the doctor may order, and shall I mention your name to Mrs. Prichard? I mean, do you wish the patient—shall we call him—to know that you are here?"

"Oh! no, pray. He is the last person on earth——"

"You are sure?"

"Perfectly. I entreat, dear Ethel, that you run no risk of my name being mentioned."

"Why, Mr. Marston knows that you are here," I said persistently.

"Bad as that was, this would be intolerable. I know, Ethel, I may rely on you."

"Well, I won't say a word—I won't mention your name, since you so ordain it."

Two or three days passed. As I had been the good Samaritan, in female garb, who aided the wounded man in his distress, I was now the visiting sister of mercy, the ministering angel—whatever you are good enough to call me—who every day saw after his wants, and sent, sometimes soup, and sometimes jelly, to favour the recovery of which the doctor spoke so sanguinely.

I did not feel the romantic interest I ought perhaps to have felt in the object of my benevolence. I had no wish to see his face again. I was haunted by a recollection of him that was ghastly. I am not wanting in courage, physical or moral. But I should have made a bad nurse, and a worse soldier; at the sight of blood I immediately grow faint, and a sense of indescribable disgust remains.

I sometimes think we women are perverse creatures. For us there is an occult interest about the guilty and audacious, if it be elevated by masculine courage and beauty, and surrounded by ever so little of mystery and romance. Shall I confess it? The image of that wicked Mr. Marston, notwithstanding all Laura's hard epithets, and the startling situation in which I had seen him last, haunted me often, and with something more of fascination than I liked to confess. Let there be energy, cleverness, beauty, and I believe a reckless sort of wickedness will not stand the least in the way of a foolish romance. I think I had energy; I know I was impetuous. Insipid or timid virtue would have had no chance with me.

I was going to the farm-house one day, I forget how long after the occurrence which had established my interesting relations with Plas Ylwd.

My mother had a large cheval-glass, it had not often reflected her pretty image; it was the only one in the house, the furniture of which was very much out of date. It had been removed to my room, and before it I now stood, in my hat and jacket, to make a last inspection before I started.

What did I see before me? I have courage to speak my real impressions, for there is no one near to laugh at me. A girl of eighteen, above the middle height, slender, with large, dark, grey eyes, and long lashes, not much colour, not pink and white, by any means, but a very clear-tinted and marble-smooth skin; lips of carmine-scarlet, and teeth very white; thick, dark brown hair; and a tendency, when talking or smiling, to dimple in cheek and chin. There was something, too, spirited

and energetic in the face that I contemplated with so much satisfaction.

I remained this day a little longer before my glass than usual.

Half an hour later, I stood at the heavy stone doorway of Plas Ylwd. It is one of the prettiest farm-houses in the world. Round the farm-yard stand very old hawthorn and lime-trees, and the farm-house is a composite building, in which a wing of the old Tudor manor-house of Plas Ylwd is incorporated, under a common thatch, which has grown brown and discoloured, and sunk and risen into hillocks and hollows by time. The door is protected by a thatched porch, with worn stone pillars; and here I stood, and learned that "the gentleman upstairs" was very well that afternoon, and sitting up; the doctor thought he would be out for a walk in two or three days. Having learned this, and all the rest that it concerned Rebecca Torkill to hear, I took my leave of good Mrs. Prichard, and, crossing the stile from the farm-yard, I entered the picturesque old wood in which the inmate of Plas Ylwd had received his wound. Through this sylvan solitude I intended returning to Malory.

CHAPTER XXII. THE OUTLAW.

As I followed my path over the unequal flooring of the forest, among the crowded trunks of the trees and the thickets of brambles, I saw, on a sudden, Mr. Marston almost beside me. I was a good deal startled, and stood still. There was something in his air and looks, as he stood with his hat raised, so unspeakably deprecatory, that I felt at once reassured. Without my permission it was plain he would not dream of accompanying me, or even of talking to me. All Laura's warnings and entreaties sounded at that moment in my ears like a far-off and unmeaning tinkle. He had no apologies to make; and yet he looked like a penitent. I was embarrassed, but without the slightest fear of him. I spoke; but I don't recollect what I said.

"I have come here, Miss Ware, as I believe, at some risk; I should have done the same thing had the danger been a hundred times greater. I tried to persuade myself that I came for no other purpose than to learn how that foolish fellow who would force a quarrel on me is getting on. But I came in truth on no such errand; I came here on the almost desperate chance of meeting you, and in the hope, if I were so fortunate, that you would permit me to say a word in my defence. I am unfortu-

nate in having two or three implacable enemies, and fate has perversely collected them here. Miss Grey stands in very confidential relations with you, Miss Ethel; her prejudices against me are cruel, violent, and in every way monstrous."

He was walking beside me as he said this.

"Mr. Marston," I interposed, "I can't hear you say a word against Miss Grey; I have the highest opinion of her; she is my very dearest friend; she is truth itself."

"One word you say I don't dispute, Miss Ware; she means all she says for truth; but she is cruelly prejudiced, and, without suspecting it, does me the most merciless injustice. Whenever she is at liberty to state her whole case against me—at present I haven't so much as heard it—I undertake to satisfy you of its utter unfairness. There is no human being to whom I would say all this, or before whom I would stoop to defend myself and sue for an acquittal, where I am blameless, but you, Miss Ware."

I felt myself blushing. I think that sign of emotion fired him.

"I could not tell," he said, extending his hand toward Plas Ylwd, "whether that foolish man was dead or living; and this was the last place on earth I should have come to, in common prudence, while that was in doubt; but I was willing to brave that danger for a chance of seeing you once more—I could not live without seeing you."

He was gazing at me, with eyes glowing with admiration. I thought he looked wonderfully handsome.

There was dash and recklessness, I thought, enough for an old-world outlaw, in his talk and looks, and, for all I knew, in his reckless doings; and the scene, the shadow, this solemn decaying forest, accorded well, in my romantic fancy, with the wild character I assigned him. There was something flattering in the devotion of this prompt and passionate man.

"Make me no answer," he continued; "no answer, I entreat. It would be mere madness to ask it now; you know nothing of me but, perhaps, the wildest slanders that prejudice ever believed, or hatred forged. From the moment I saw you, in the old garden at Malory, I loved you! Love at first sight! It was no such infatuation. It was the recalling of some happy dream. I had forgotten it in my waking hours; but I recognised, with a pang and rapture, in you, the spirit that had en-

thrall'd me. I loved you long before I knew it. I can't escape. Ethel, I adore you!"

I don't know how I felt; I was pretty sure that I ought to have been very angry. And I was half angry with myself for not being angry.

I was, however, which answered just as well, a little alarmed; I felt as a child does when about to enter a dark room, and I drew back at the threshold.

"Pray, Mr. Marston, don't speak so to me any longer; it is quite true, I do not know you; you have no right to talk to me in my walks; pray leave me, now."

"I shall obey you, Miss Ware; whatever you command, I shall do. My last entreaty is, that you will not condemn me unheard; and pray do not mention to my enemies the infatuation that has led me here, with the courage of despair—no, not quite despair, I won't say that. I shall never forget you. Would to Heaven I could! I shall never forget, or escape you; who can disenchant me? I shall never forget, or cease to pursue you, Ethel, I swear by Heaven!"

He looked in my face for a moment, raised my hand gently, but quickly, and pressed it to his lips, before I had recovered from my momentary tumult. I did not turn to look after him. I instinctively avoided that, but I heard his footsteps, in rapid retreat, in the direction of the farm-house which I had just left.

It was not until I had got more than half-way on my return to Malory, that I began to think clearly on what had just occurred.

What had I been dreaming of? I was shocked to think of it. Here was a total stranger admitted to something like the footing of a declared lover! What was I to do? What would papa or mamma say if my folly were to come to their ears? I did not even know where Mr. Marston was to be found. Some one has compared the Iliad to a frieze, which ceases, but does not end; and precisely of the same kind was this awkward epic of the wood of Plas Ylwd. Who could say when the poet might please to continue his work? Who could say how I could now bring the epic to a peremptory termination?

I must confess, however, although I felt the embarrassment of the situation, this lawless man interested me. Like many whimsical young ladies, I did not quite know my own mind.

On the step of the stile that crosses the

churchyard wall, near Malory, I sat down, in rather uncomfortable rumination. I was interrupted by the sound of a step upon the road, approaching from the direction of Malory. I looked up, and, greatly to my surprise, saw Mr. Carmel, quite close to me. I stood up, and walked a few steps to meet him; we shook hands, he smiling, very glad, I knew, to meet me.

"You did not expect to see me so soon again, Miss Ware? And I have ever so much to tell you. I can't say whether it will please or vex you; but if you and Miss Grey will give me my old chair at your tea-table, I will look in for half an hour this evening. I have first to call at old Parry's, and give him a message that reached me from your mamma, yesterday."

He smiled again, as he continued his walk, leaving me full of curiosity as to the purport of his news.

CHAPTER XXIII. A JOURNEY.

BEHOLD us now, about an hour later, at our tea-table. Mr. Carmel, as he had promised, came in and talked, as usual, agreeably; but, if he had any particular news to tell us, he had not yet begun to communicate it.

"You found your old quarters awaiting your return. We have lost our interesting stranger," I said; "I wish you would tell us all you know about him."

Mr. Carmel's head sank; his eyes were fixed, in painful thought, upon the table. "No," he said, looking up sharply, "God knows all, and that's enough. The story could edify no one."

He looked so pained, and even agitated, that I could not think of troubling him more.

"I have grown so attached to this place," said Mr. Carmel, rising and looking from the window, "that I can scarcely make up my mind to say good-bye, and turn my back on it for ever; yet I believe I must in a few days. I don't know. We soldiers, ecclesiastics, I mean, must obey orders, and I scarcely hope that mine will ever call me here again. I have news for you, also, Miss Ethel; I had a letter from your mamma, and a note from Mr. Ware, last night, and there is to be a break-up here, and a movement townward; you are to come out next season, Miss Ethel; your mamma and papa will be in town for a week or so, in a few days; and, Miss Grey, she hopes you will not leave her on account of the change."

He paused; but she made no answer.

"Oh! darling Laura, you won't leave me?" I exclaimed.

"Certainly not, dear Ethel; and whenever the time for parting comes," she said very kindly, "it will cost me a greater pang than perhaps it will cost you. But though I am neither a soldier nor an ecclesiastic, my movements do not always depend upon myself."

Unrestrained by Mr. Carmel's presence we kissed each other heartily.

"Here is a note, Miss Grey, enclosed for you," he murmured, and handed it to Laura.

In our eagerness we had got up and stood with Mr. Carmel in the recess of the window. It was twilight, and the table on which the candles burned stood at a considerable distance. To the light Laura Grey took her letter, and as she read it, quite absorbed, Mr. Carmel talked to me in his low tones.

As we stood in the dim recess of the window, with trains of withered leaves rustling outside, and the shadow of the sear and half-stripped elms upon the court and window, he said, kindly and gently:

"And now, at last, Miss Ethel forsakes her old home, and takes leave of her humble friends, to come into the great world. I don't think she will forget them, and I am sure they won't forget her. We have had a great many pleasant evenings here, and in our conversations in these happy solitudes, the terrors and glories of eternal truth have broken slowly upon your eyes. Beware! If you trifle with Heaven's mercy, the world, or hell, or heaven itself, has no narcotic for the horrors of conscience. In the midst of pleasure and splendour, and the tawdry triumphs of vanity, the words of Saint Paul will startle your ears like thunder. It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance. The greater the privilege, the greater the liability. The higher the knowledge, the profounder the danger. You have seen the truth afar off; rejoice, therefore, and tremble."

He drew back and joined Miss Grey.

I had been thinking but little, for many weeks, of our many conversations. Incipient convictions had paled in the absence of the sophist or the sage—I knew not which. When he talked on this theme, his voice became cold and stern; his gen-

leness seemed to me to partake of an awful apathy; he looked like a man who had witnessed a revelation full of horror; my fancy I am sure contributed something to the transformation; but it did overawe me. I never was so impressed as by him. The secret was not in his words. It was his peculiar earnestness. He spoke like an eye-witness, and seemed under unutterable fear himself. He had the preacher's master-gift of alarming.

When Mr. Carmel had taken his leave for the night, I told Laura Grey my adventure in the wood of Plas Ylwd. I don't think I told it quite as frankly as I have just described it to you. The story made Miss Grey very grave for a time.

She broke the silence that followed by saying, "I am rather glad, Ethel, that we are leaving this. I think you will be better in town; I know I shall be more comfortable about you. You have no idea, and I earnestly hope you never may have, how much annoyance may arise from an acquaintance with that plausible, wicked man. He won't venture to force his acquaintance upon you in town. Here it is different, of course."

We sat up very late together, chatting this night in my room. I did not quite know how I felt about the impending change. My approaching journey to London was, to me, as great an event, as her drive to the ball in her pumpkin-coach was to Cinderella. Of course there was something dazzling and delightful in the prospect. But the excitement and joy were like that of the happy bride who yet weeps, because she is looking her last on the old homely life, that will always be dear and dearer as the irrevocable separation goes on. So, though she is sure that she is passing into paradise, it is a final farewell to the beloved past. I felt the conflict; I loved Malory better than I could ever love a place again. But youth is the season of enterprise. God has ordained it. We go like the younger son in the parable, selfish, sanguine, adventurous; but the affections revive and turn homeward, and from a changed heart sometimes breaks on the solitude a cry, unheard by living ear, of yearning and grief, that would open the far-off doors, if that were possible, and return.

Next day arrangements took a definite form. All was fuss and preparation. I was to go the day following; Mr. Carmel was to take charge of me on the journey, and place me safely in the hands of Mrs. Beau-

champ, our town housekeeper. Laura Grey, having wound up and settled all things at Malory, was to follow to town in less than a week; and, at about the same time, mamma and papa were to arrive.

A drive of ten miles or so brought us to the station; then came a long journey by rail. London was not new to me; but London with my present anticipations was. I was in high spirits, and Mr. Carmel made a very agreeable companion, though I fancied he was a little out of spirits.

I was tired enough that night when I at length took leave of Mr. Carmel at the door of our house in — street. The street lamps were already lighted. Mrs. Beauchamp, in a black silk dress, received me with a great deal of quiet respect, and rustled up-stairs before me to show me my room. Her grave and regulated politeness contrasted chillily with the hearty, and sometimes even boisterous welcome of old Rebecca Torkill.

Mamma and papa were to be home, she told me, in a few days—she could not say exactly the day. I was, after an hour or so, a great deal lonelier than I had expected to be. I wrote a long letter to Laura, of whom I had taken leave only that morning (what a long time it seemed already!), and told her how much I already wished myself back again in Malory, and urged her to come sooner than she had planned her journey.

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

COVENT GARDEN (NEIGHBOURHOOD).

KING-STREET (north-west corner), has been for more than a century noted for its old booksellers and book auctioneers. Here the antiquary prowls, and, spectacles on nose, eyes in a window, as a jackdaw cons a bone, the trap baited with a black-letter volume. One of the most famous of these book auctioneers was Patterson, Doctor Johnson's friend, who came here after leaving Sir Orlando Bridgeman's old house in Essex-street, Strand. He was renowned for his book catalogues, and was the first auctioneer who sold books singly, instead of in lots. He had read nearly everything he sold, and often drew the bidder's attention to curious passages. In this way he once pointed out to Doctor Lort, at page forty-seven of a little pamphlet he was selling, a curious and rare anecdote of Sir Edmondbury Godfrey. The book was put up at two shillings, but a vigorous com-

petition followed, and it eventually went for one pound five shillings. This was something like a book auctioneer. Rainy-Day Smith has left us an admirable description of the frequenters of the Covent Garden book and print sales in the last century. His sketches are as keen and vivid as etchings, and there is a peculiar quiet Wilkie vein of humour about his portraits of the old worthies.

Messrs. Patterson and Hutchins were next-door neighbours to the elder Langford (the Puff of Foote's farce of the Minor) on the north side of King-street, Covent Garden. At the sale of Mr. Moser's collection, in 1783, the following remarkable characters were observed.

Mr. Patterson, Doctor Johnson's friend, was a short, spare, stooping man, who wore a powdered club wig, similar to that of Garrick's friend, the bookseller Davies. Patterson was a walking library; he had a slight impediment in his speech, and, notwithstanding he pronounced Canterbury Canterbevy, and dromedary dwommedavy, lectured publicly on Shakespeare.

Mr. Gough, the editor of Camden's Britannia, and a frequenter of Patterson's book sales, was also a short man, with fretful, winky-pinky eyes. He wore a short shining curled wig, generally affected boots, and carried a swish whip. His temper was not good, and he seldom forgave persons who stoutly bid against him.

Doctor Lort, the chaplain to the Duke of Devonshire, and correspondent of Old Cole, was a tall, broad, bony man, of morose manners and forbidding aspect. He wore a large bushy wig, unpowdered. His coarse and unfeeling wit was chiefly directed against little deformed Doctor Gossett, whose temper used to give way if the threepenny biddings continued long.

Mr. Hutchins, the auctioneer, was a short fat man, with a receding forehead. His wife, of the same shape and size, used to accompany her husband, and sit in a large easy-chair by the fire in the auction-room. They always agreed together about prices and purchases, so that Caleb Whiteford used to say that "Cocker's rule was not always correct, for one and one did not, it seemed, always make two." Caleb Whiteford, the witty wine-merchant of Craven-street, was a slight-built man, with thin face and little eyes, and of gentlemanly deportment, who shrugged his shoulders when he talked. He was a careful dresser, and his hat and wig were the latest specimens of the Garrick school. He con-

sidered himself a first-rate judge of the old masters' pictures, which he was conceited enough to touch up, falling back in his chair, and turning his head from one shoulder to another approvingly as he painted. Captain William Baillie was a great sufferer from asthma, a complaint which he ingeniously availed himself of in conversation. The captain, a stamp commissioner, was a miserable amateur etcher, though he could not draw, and had no eye for effect. When West asked him on one occasion to show him a fine impression of Rembrandt's Hundred Guilder Print, he placed before the venerable president, with the utmost confidence, one of his own restored impressions. He had even the childish impudence to improve on Rembrandt's miracle of art—The Three Trees. Baillie wore a camel coat, and walked slowly, and with measured steps, as if he wore a French postilion's boots. He generally coughed as he entered the auction-room. Mr. Boker, a rich lace merchant, a singular slovenly-dressed man, was a great purchaser of choice impressions. Mr. Woodhouse, of Tokenhouse-yard, a collector of Cipriani's drawings, had been principal cashier at Sir George Prescott's banking-house. Mr. Musgrave, of Norfolk-street, a benevolent and accomplished gentleman, was a buyer of pictures at this period. He was a short man, with pleasing features, and usually wore a rose in his button-hole. Mr. Pitt, of Westminster, a precise man, who wore a large five-story white wig, was another polite and kind-hearted attendant at Hutchins's evening sales. Another great collector was Mr. Woodhull, the translator of Euripides. He was a thin, taciturn, gentleman-like man, with a long nose and thick lips. He wore his coat buttoned from the chin to nearly the bottom of his deep-flapped waistcoat. He seldom spoke, and would never exceed by one sixpence the sum he had marked down in his catalogue to give. He always took off his hat, and bowed low to the company, before he left the auction-room. Mr. Rawle, the accoutrement maker in the Strand, a friend of Grose's, and executor of Worledge, the etcher, was another visitor. He possessed a cabinet of Elizabethan portraits, a wig of Charles the Second, some letters of Cromwell, his helmet, and the leather doublet which he wore when he dissolved the Parliament. Mr. Rawle was an eccentric man, and would never allow more than a halfpenny a day to be spent on vegetables for his table.

Another *lusus nature* was Beauvais, a

short, lumpy Frenchman, who had been a miniature painter at Tunbridge Wells. Through sheer idleness, his person and dress had become so filthy that no one would sit near him. Yet for years he was a constant attendant at Court, and would come to the auction-rooms in his black suit, sword, and bag. Suett, the actor, used to call him "Sack of Sand." He sat at the lower end of the table alone, and seldom made any purchases, or was spoken to. He used to annoy Hutchins by the loudest of all snoring. Doctor Wolcot used to occasionally ask him a question in order to hear him answer, as his voice was like the gobbling of a turkey-cock. This waif of humanity lived in a two-pair-back in St. James's Market. After his death, Hutchins sold his furniture. His spinet, music, and stool, and a few dog's-eared sheets of music-lessons, sold for three and sixpence. Mr. Matthew Mitchell, the banker, was a "portly" mannered man, with a chin as wide as Titus Oates's, and a set of large, white teeth. His face bespoke a good-natured, kind, and liberal person. He had a serious antipathy to a kitten. Directly he saw one in the room, his flesh used to shake on his bones; and he declared that the kitten used to seem to him to grow as big as an elephant. At this time Hogarth's prints were in great demand, and Mr. Packer, of Combe's brew-house, was one of the most enterprising collectors. He was a tall, handsome man, with a blunt manner. His two opponents were Vincent and Powell. The first was a tall, half-starved looking man, who had been a chaser of milk-pots, watch-cases, and heads of canes. He always walked with a show article—a triple-gilt, chased-headed cane. Powell went by the name of "Old Black Wig." Henderson, the player, Gainsborough's friend, was another Hogarth collector, but John Ireland was his agent. Mr. Hayward, better known as "Old Iron Wig," was a purchaser of Rowlandson's drawings. He was a precise man, with a stiff way of walking. Mr. Segnier, the picture-dealer, used to bid for him. Rowlandson produced a spirited etching of Hutchins's print auctions, with portraits of the printsellers of the day. There is also a plate of Portraits of Printsellers, by Silvester Harding, but the faces seem all of the same family.

After Patterson, Messrs. King, Collins, and Chapman seized the ivory hammer, and sold books and prints, letting out their large room at night for entertainments.

Here Collins, a well-known man in his day, gave his *Evening Brush*, or anecdotes of persons who had died before three-fourths of his audience were born. After him Charles Dibdin commenced his *London Amusement*, and sang his immortal *Poor Jack*, which has made many a boy a sailor. For months, says Mr. Timbs, the printers could not throw off Dibdin's songs fast enough, and the author had to hire a small movable shed for a man to stand and deliver out copies—the scrambles and fights for *Poor Tom Bowling* and *Poll and my Partner Joe* being something tremendous. At the corner of Rose-street lived Mr. Setchel, a well-known bookseller, whose daughter painted a once popular picture, *The Momentous Question*. In a house on the north side, in the time of the Commonwealth, lived Lenthal, the Speaker. This was that weak *Face-both-ways*, who held to the Commons, though he was respectful to Charles when he took his seat in the House, and inquired for the obnoxious members. Cromwell soon got rid of him, but he was in again with the Rump Parliament, and eventually escaped at the Restoration.

Mahogany, though for centuries used by the Spaniards in ship-building, was first tried in England in King-street in the last century. Doctor Gibbons, an eminent physician of this street, was building a house; his brother, a West India captain, who had brought some mahogany as ballast, sent him some of the wood as a curiosity; but the carpenters, finding it hard to work, threw it aside. Soon after this Mrs. Gibbons, wanting a candle-box, sent Wollaston, a cabinet-maker in Long-acre, some mahogany to make it from, and would allow of no excuse. The box was made, and liked; the doctor then tried a bureau, which his friends, especially the Duchess of Buckingham, thought beautiful for colour and polish. The duchess begged some mahogany, and had a bureau also, and the fame of it soon made the fortune of the new wood. Mr. Timbs says that the present doors of a few of the better class of old houses in King-street are solid mahogany.

Next door to the old Garrick Club-house (No. 38) lived Arne, the upholsterer, at whose house the Cherokee kings (North American chiefs) mentioned by Addison so pleasantly in the *Spectator* (No. 50), lodged in the reign of Queen Anne. Here Arne, the composer of *Rule Britannia*, when the family were asleep, practised nightly on a muffled spinet. When a lawyer's clerk, Arne

used to borrow a livery, and steal up into the servants' gallery at the Opera House. He composed the music for Addison's *Rosamond* and Fielding's *Tom Thumb*, and was the first of English composers to strike out a path apart from Purcell or Handel. His sister, a great tragic actress, married that great rascal, Theophilus Cibber. "Tragedy has expired with her," Garrick said, when they told him of her death. Handel and Quin usually spent their Monday evenings at the house of this amiable, accomplished, and injured woman. The father of the present tenant was the publisher of the splendid mezzotint, by Clint, from Harlow's last and greatest work, the *Trial of Queen Katherine*, in which Lawrence's favourite pupil has introduced portraits of all the Kemble family. Mr. Welsh gave the artist one hundred guineas, and Mr. Cribb another hundred, for the permission to engrave it. Think of prices now! Mr. Cribb first discovered the talent of that clever cattle painter, Mr. Sidney Cooper. Miss Mitford tells the story how some cows, by Cooper, in an obscure shop window in Soho, struck Mr. Cribb, who was passing. He ferreted out the unknown artist, and gave him his first commission. The picture was seen by the frequenters of Cribb's crib, and the result was fortune for the humble young painter, and Royal Academy honours.

It was in Rose-alley—a mean turning out of the west end of King-street, leading to Long-acre—that Dryden, on a December night, 1679, was cruelly beaten by Black Will and two other hired bullies of Rochester's. The king offered fifty pounds reward, but Rochester no doubt offered more, for the offenders were never apprehended. The poem was, after all, written by Lord Mulgrave, and only corrected by Dryden, and there is no proof that Dryden ever wrote a line of it. The *Rose-alley Ambuscade* became after that a popular phrase. Dryden lived at the time in Long-acre (west end), opposite Rose-alley. Perhaps *Hudibras* Butler, looking out of window, saw the affray, and little thought a brother satirist was suffering, for he was living in Rose-street at the time, and died there the year after. The author of a poem stuffed as full of wit as a sausage is with meat, and who might have almost laughed Cromwell off his throne, published his poem a little too late. Fashions had changed, and the world was glad to forget the Puritan despotism. Butler lived, we are told, "in a studious retired manner,"

and though not in debt, was buried in St. Paul's, Covent Garden, at the expense of Mr. Longueville, an admirer of his genius. The alley did not apparently improve much in the Hogarthian times, for it became a den of highwaymen. Saunders Welsh, a zealous justice of the peace, and Nollekens's father-in-law, once captured there a dangerous fellow who infested the roads about Marylebone Gardens. The rascal had long eluded the officers, and generally slept in a first floor in Rose-street. The determined justice, therefore, hired the tallest hackney-coach he could pick out, and, armed and muffled up, mounted the box beside the coachman. He knew there was no side pavement in the alley, and that he could drive close to the house. On arriving there he clambered on the slippery coach, threw up the first floor sash, leaped into the room, dragged the fellow by his hair naked out of bed, and sprawling him on the roof of the coach, carried him off to Bow-street. In this fitting street, that infamous bookseller, Curll, was living when he published, by the poet's secret consent (as it now appears), Mr. Pope's Literary Correspondence. The letters were nearly all re-written and heightened by the vain and not very scrupulous author.

It is said that Gentleman Lewis, the most airy, impudent, and delightful fop ever known on the stage, once lived at the first residence of the Garrick Club.

The neighbourhood of the "Garden" has indeed furnished pottles full of anecdotes, having been in its time a perfect flower-bed of clever and distinguished characters. At the south-west corner of Tavistock-court lived the singer Miss Reay, who was shot by her lover, the Reverend James Hackman. This plain but fascinating woman was the mistress of the bad Lord Sandwich, the friend of Wilkes, and his betrayer. Hackman, who had been in the army, took orders in order to win her, but the black coat failed as the red had done. The weak man, driven to frenzy for a worthless woman, resolved to shoot himself in her presence, which would at least be a satisfaction, but seeing her at the theatre talking and flirting with a young Templar, he watched her into her carriage, and shot her first and then himself. He recovered sufficiently to be hanged, and with him in the coach to Tyburn rode his obtrusive comforter, the absurd and irrepressible Boswell.

In the upper part of the same house to which the body of the murdered woman

was brought, Macklin afterwards lived. This good rugged actor, probably the best Shylock who ever appeared on the London boards, was well abused by Churchill, who described his features as "inflexible and coarse," his acting as "hard, affected, and constrained." Overbearing, rough, and quarrelsome as he was, Macklin nevertheless wrote two good comedies, *Love à la Mode* and *the Man of the World*, one of which (thanks to Mr. Phelps) still holds the stage. Macklin gave lectures and taught elocution at a tavern he started under the Piazza. When the elder Mathews (the son of a "serious bookseller" in the Strand) began to appear in private theatricals, he obtained an introduction to Macklin, and visited the old lion in his den, resolved to give him a taste of his quality. He arrived at Tavistock-court, and went up; there was Macklin in his arm-chair; when the door opened and the youth was announced, he did not attempt to rise, nor, indeed, to take any notice of the entrance of the stranger, but remained with one arm on either elbow of the chair he sat in, looking sour and severe at his expected pupil, who, hesitating on the threshold, paused timidly, which occasioned Macklin to call out, in any but inviting tones, "Come nearer. What do you stand there for? You can't act in the gap of the door." The young man approached. "Well," added Macklin, in tones ill calculated to inspire confidence, "now let me hear you; don't be afraid." His crabbed austerity completely chilled the aspirant's ardour; however, mustering up all the confidence this harsh reception had left him, he began to declaim according to the approved rule of "speech days." Macklin, sitting like a stern judge, waiting to pronounce sentence upon a criminal, rather than to laud a hero, soon interrupted the speech with a mock imitation of the novice's monotonous tones, barking out "Bow, wow, wow, wow." This was enough to damp the Thespian flame which had lighted the poor youth into the presence of the terrible old man, and he felt himself unable to make another essay, but stood with downcast eyes and swelling heart, awaiting the verdict which he expected. At last Macklin, with increasing severity of manner and voice, asked, "Young man, are you at all aware what the qualifications of an actor should be?" The youth sighed out, "I believe not, sir." Macklin: "No, I am sure you do not. I will tell you, then, sir. I will tell you what he ought to be; what

I was; and what no man was ever eminent without being. In the first place an actor ought to possess a fine and expressive eye, 'An eye like Mars to threaten and command.' " (His own flatly contradicted his assertion.) "Sir, he should have a beautiful countenance. He should be able to assume a look that might appal the devil." (Here, indeed, he had one requisite in full force.) "He should possess a fine, clear, mellifluous voice." (Alas, his own sounded like a cracked trumpet!) "A graceful figure, sir." (The lean and slippered pantaloons was an Apollo Belvidere to Macklin.) "But, above all, young man—above all—an actor—should possess—that—first—great—natural—requisite—that—test—of—genius—a good—a good—sir," he added, in a loud and angry voice, as if commanding assistance, "I want a word—he should, I say, possess a good retentive——" "Memory," cried out the young man. "Ay, sir, memory."

Here the old man seemed to dwell pensively for a time upon the attribute just lent to him; then rousing himself from his thoughtful posture, he looked up in his visitor's face, as if inquiring what he did there. "Well, sir? Oh, well, well" (as if rising from the abyss of forgetfulness) "as I have said, an actor's requisites are many. Amongst the rest, discrimination. Sir, in the course of my long life I never knew more than three actors who possessed discrimination. David Garrick was one, I, Charles Macklin, another, and the third was—a—a—a——" (Here his voice sank, as if step by step, till it reached a landing-place, where it was stationary and mute for some seconds; he then added, in a sort of mental soliloquy, and with a half-sigh) "I forget who was the other." Then closing his eyes, he sank back into his chair, as if asleep, and was certainly unconscious of the exit of the young Thespian, who, shutting the door quietly after him, flew down-stairs like a lap-wing, opened the street door, and ran away, rejoicing in his escape, as if he feared the sour old man, who had curdled his blood with his severity, would have shut him up for life in his dreary presence.

At No. 13, Tavistock-row, dwelt Zincke, a native of Dresden, one of the greatest of our miniature painters. It is a question still whether photographers, following the sun's mistakes, have excelled the miniatures of our forefathers, truthful and exquisite as they were in colour and drawing. No flesh looks so pulpy as that painted on

ivory, no eyes are so bright or so liquid moreover. Fair people are fair in miniatures, and dark people are dark. Zincke came over to England in 1706, and soon raised his prices to thirty guineas. He was much patronised by George the Second and Queen Caroline, and, after he quitted business and retired to South Lambeth, Madame de Pompadour sent him over a picture of her royal lover, Louis the Fifteenth, to copy in enamel.

In the garret of the same illustrious house (now a bookseller's) lived that jovial, robust Doctor Wolcot (Peter Pindar). This tormentor of poor old George the Third (till, as some say, he was silenced with the sweet sop of a pension), was a political and artistic satirist of great popularity in his day. Who can forget his story of the wonder of the old king as to how the apples got inside the dumplings, or his malicious account of the not overwise king's fussy visit to Whitbread's brewery? Wolcot had been a careless pigeon-shooting parson in Jamaica. After that he turned professional curer of his fellow-creatures' bodies, who, however, proved unwilling to be either healed or killed by him. There is a story that Wolcot, when selling his copyright to the bookseller for an annuity of two hundred and fifty pounds a year, followed the old papal trick, assumed a tearing cough, and put on the manner of a dying man. He once tried to thrash Gifford, but was gallantly beaten off. He discovered Opie, over-patronised him, and then quarrelled with him. Campbell eulogised his great knowledge of human nature, and Rogers confessed that he almost preferred his satirical verse to that of Churchill's.

At the same house, also, lived that lucky artist, Sir Nathaniel Dance, a pupil of Hogarth's boon companion, Hayman, and son of the architect of the Mansion House. Dance married a Mrs. Drummer, a Hampshire heiress. His finest works were his Timon of Athens, his portraits of Garrick and Omai of Otaheite. It was untruly reported that he bought up his early pictures to destroy them. Dance's eldest brother was one of the original forty Royal Academicians.

At No. 13 flourished Meyer, an eminent miniature painter of the Garrick time, and at No. 8, Tavistock-row, died that fine sea painter, Vandervelde the younger, the son of the well-known Dutch artist of Charles the Second's time. He almost lived on the Thames, sketching from nature,

though whether he ever in his enthusiasm rowed out to see a fight between the Dutch and English fleets, as his father had done, we do not know. He drew and composed well; his colour is pure and transparent, his clouds are buoyant, and though he did not paint with Turner's subtlety and realism, he excelled him in breadth and harmony.

Maiden-lane (perhaps originally Midden, Dunghill, or Rubbish Heap-lane), is not a thoroughfare of promise, yet it has in its time furnished homes to many eminent men. When Voltaire, early in life, came to England to study the manners of us "outer barbarians," he lodged at a barber's, whose sign was the White Peruke, next door, as tradition still affirms, to the Bedford. From here we may imagine him sallying forth to visit Congreve, who was vexed at the brilliant Frenchman regarding him more as an author than a grand gentleman.

"Sir," said Voltaire, "if you had been merely a gentleman, I should not have waited upon you."

But of all the memories of Maiden-lane, none are dearer to us than those which associate it with that true poet and excellent man, Andrew Marvell, who lodged here when he was the paid member of parliament for Hull, in the reign of Charles the Second. We picture him as Aubrey sketches him, "of middling stature, pretty strong set, rounded face, cherry-cheeked, hazel-eyed, brown-haired, in conversation modest, and of very few words." No doubt, acting on his own prudent maxim, Marvell never drank "high or freely" with any one at the Bedford—with any one with whom he could not trust his life. His terrible lampoons were read, Burnett says, by every one, from the king to the tradesman, and the only wonder is he ever kept his sensible head tight on his shoulders.

It was in his humble lodgings in Maiden-lane that this true patriot received the tempter from the Court, who assayed to bribe him with golden promises, and whom he quietly rebuked by showing him the meagre, bare blade of a shoulder of mutton on which he had been dining. Marvell must have been an extraordinary genius to have written the best hymns, the most scathing lampoons, and the most graceful and tender poems of his age.

The Bedford Head, lately pulled down, was a tavern of celebrity in Pope's time; and the poet has mentioned it more than once. He says:

When sharp with hunger, scorn you to be fed,
Except on pea-chicks at the Bedford Head?

There is an anecdote of Horace Walpole, who mentions a party of gentlemen coming here, in 1741, dressed as sailors, and masked, to get up a riot, about Admiral Vernon, who had been wronged by the government, but the affair came to nothing.

In many eyes, Maiden-lane is chiefly illustrious as the birthplace of our greatest English landscape painter, Joseph Mallard William Turner, son of a hairdresser, at No. 26. The boy began by colouring prints for John Raphael Smith, the mezzotint engraver, who lived in the same lane, and that admirable water-colour artist, Girtin, was a colourer for the same shop. Turner afterwards took rooms in Hand-court, and there, in jealous seclusion, produced fifty-nine of his exhibited works.

The Cider Cellar, on the south side of Maiden-lane, opened as a midnight concert-room about 1730, was the favourite haunt of that thirsty philologist, Porson. Byron describes Porson at Cambridge as "sulky, abusive, and intolerable." When drunk, he would take up a poker, and assault the under-graduates. One night, at the Cider Cellar, as Porson was smoking with his friend Gordon, he suddenly said:

"Friend George, do you think the widow Lurnan an agreeable sort of personage as times go?"

Gordon agreed that she was.

"In that case," replied Porson, "meet me to-morrow morning at eight at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields."

The next morning the marriage sure enough took place; but after the wedding dinner the great Greek scholar stole away, hurried to the Cider Cellar, and remained there smoking and drinking till eight the next morning—so debased and swinish was the man whom Parr called "a giant in literature, a prodigy in intellect." A large mezzotint of Porson used to hang over the fireplace at the Cider Cellar.

Our space will scarcely allow us to go further than Henrietta-street, a street sufficient of itself to supply material for a whole article; and, first of all, we meet turning into this street from Covent-Garden, Garrick's joy and plague—wilful, witty, tormenting Kitty Clive, the little "Pivy," whose bad spelling, and quaint, shrewd letters so amused her neighbour at Twickenham, Horace Walpole. Kitty, the archest of stage chambermaids, has many a time tripped up this street. Maria Foote long after affected the same locality. The subsequent Countess of Harrington must have been tender and graceful indeed if

she deserved the eulogies she received from Talfourd and Horace Smith. Yet we feel sure she did. "Of comedies' handmaidens the most delicate and graceful," says the latter; "of tragedies' sufferers, the loveliest."

Two celebrated actresses, a poet, and three artists, that is the bag Henrietta-street furnishes. The artists were Cooper, the miniature painter, and M'Ardell and Sir Robert Strange, the celebrated engravers. Cooper, called "the miniature Vandyke," married Pope's aunt. He produced the finest and most intellectual portrait of Cromwell, for which likeness the French court offered in vain one hundred and fifty pounds. He also drew Charles the Second, the Duchess of Cleveland, and most of that butterfly court. His heads were unrivalled for force and grace, and no one could treat flesh and hair as he could. M'Ardell was one of the finest mezzotint engravers of the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who declared M'Ardell would immortalise him. His mezzotint of Hogarth's Captain Coram is one of his chef-d'œuvres. As for Strange, he was one of our greatest line engravers, and reproduced some of Guido's and Raphael's finest works. Strange was a Jacobite, and had been out in the '45. Pursued by Cumberland's brutal soldiers, he slipped into a house, and was secreted under the hoop of a brave young lady, with whom he at once fell in love, and afterwards married. Sir Robert bitterly resented the Academy's contemptuous treatment of engravers, and wrote against the forty sharply.

In this street was the Castle Tavern, where Sheridan fought a duel with Captain Mathews, his unprincipled rival for the hand of the beautiful Miss Linley, the singer. Our poet of Henrietta-street, Paul Whitehead, is no very exalted specimen of the article, for Paul was a member of the Hell Fire Club, and a fellow debauchee of Wilkes and Churchill; nor did his friends apparently set any vast store by him, since Churchill says:

May I (can worse disgrace on manhood fall)
Be born a Whitehead and baptised a Paul.

Poor Paul's satires contain, however, here and there some sensible lines.

The last place we have to visit in Henrietta-street is No. 3, once Offley's, a well-known supper-room forty years ago. Offley had been a waiter at Bellamy's, and was famous for his substantial chops, strewed with savoury shreds of shalot. One night a week amateur singing was allowed, and

Offley himself, in a jovial mood, would troll out one of Captain Morris's fine bacchanalian ditties. The window of the large room looked out on the churchyard, and the story goes that the night after the funeral of the original of Mr. Thackeray's Captain Costigan, who was buried under the window, Morris, and other boon companions of the deceased, poured on the poor wretch's grave libations of punch. This is just the sort of sorrow, dashed with sentiment, that such men might have been expected to have shown.

THE INVITATION.

If I called thee, wouldst thou come,
Love, across the Northern Sea,
From thy dark and rugged home
Back to Italy and me?

Here the sky is blue, intense,
Here the Arno's lingering feet
Blend, with Earth's glad affluence,
Sounds and sighs of summer sweet.

Here the fireflies wing their flight,
Pulsing to the magic tune
Murmured every breathless night
Through our warm delicious June.

Here the roses in sweet scorn
Smile above the rugged wall,
Here, wave fields of yellow corn,
Lit by poppies red and tall.

Music here from soft-voiced birds,
Wild, pathetic, eager song,
Plaintive as a lute's low chords,
Piercing as a clarion strong.

Here are vines which clasp and fold
Rude, bare boughs, with tendrils fine,
Here are fruits of orient gold,
Fountains which like rainbows shine.

Melody and fragrance here,
Opal tints on hill and plain,
Lithe green reeds with lifted spear,
Purple grapes mid ripening grain.

Beauty's fairest home is here,
Earth baptised in light and dew.
Haste, the summer draweth near!
Haste, where souls are born anew!
I have called thee, thou wilt come.

THE CUPBOARD PAPERS.

VIII. THE SWEET ART.

THE baker rings at your gate every morning, and what is it he brings you? The choice of three or four varieties of bread. The household loaf, the cottage loaf, the tin loaf, brown bread, the brick loaf, and the two varieties of rolls, including that we have the assurance to call the French. The bread varies little, the shape alone is the novelty. In bread, as in meat, we show a wasteful and dismal monotony. Compare the breakfast breads of Belgium, Germany, Austria (your Austrian is a perfect baker), Italy, Switzerland (I have eaten some delightful little

rolls in the heart of the hills), and France. The varieties, not only of form, but of solidity and flavour, are endless. From the cart-wheel form and close solidity of those prodigious loaves that are sold at the cart-tail in Normandy, the workman's pain de ménage and the soldier's pain de munition, to the dainty croissant on the boudoir table, the pain gruan, of the finest flour and sweetest milk, the Viennese round roll, the sweet Russian bread with its aniseed flavour, the pain galette, the long, sweet Greek roll, the gondolo and croquignolles, the biscuit of Bergamo, and the sweet grissini of Turin, there are a hundred varieties of the staff of life to be found on the Continent. A mere list of French cakes and tarts would fill pages. The savarins, habas, éclairs, madeleines, St. Honorés, or Pompadours, goronflots, gâteaux aux amandes, macaroni cakes, are but a few of the list. And our American kinsfolk are not far behind the Parisians and Viennese in variety, if they be thoroughly distanced in the higher branches of the sweet art. Their breakfast-tables are as richly garnished as their tea-tables. The varieties of food they have taken to their cupboards are surprising, and when they reach England they are disgusted to find that they must be content with chops and steaks, eggs and bacon, and cold meat for breakfast, with just one kind of bread.

"It is bad enough here," the Honourable Mr. Ruggles Peck observed to me one morning when we breakfasted at neighbouring tables at the Grand Hotel; "but what do you say to your country, sir? What can you say to a breakfast at an ordinary London hotel? It ain't a breakfast—it ain't the ghost of a breakfast. Now, my dear, just run off a few of the griddles, and cakes, and breads we eat at home, in any good hotel, or in our own parlour."

"I should take an hour, and only be beginning then," said the Honourable Mrs. Ruggles Peck; "but here's a few, and I can't see why you cannot have more of them this side of the Atlantic. We have corn cake and corn bread to begin with, griddle cakes, and waffles; then rice or hominy griddle cakes, buckwheat cakes, Missouri corn cakes, rye and Indian griddle cakes, nice Johnny cake, hoe cake, morning biscuit, milk toast, oatmeal cake, meat biscuit. Then for breads we have rye and Indian bread, Rhode Island corn bread, potatoe bread, rice bread—in the South—and, plenty more. You see, sir, we use

every variety of flour, and don't despise rye as you do in your country. We're a good deal like the French, and have a mind to try all the goods that come in our way. Why somewhere in this country, they tell me, they make a bread with a mixture of apples and flour—that must be, I should think, very good indeed. They just put one-third of boiled apple pulp to two-thirds of wheat flour, and ferment it with yeast for twelve hours. I should say it would be very light, and pleasant to the palate. At any rate, when I get to my home I shall try it."

"And fifty other things too, I reckon, we have seen while we have been travelling around," the Honourable Ruggles Peck added, while he ate his second raw tomato. Pointing to it with his knife, he observed, "Now here's a thing, for the life of you, you can't obtain for breakfast in London. It is wholesome, refreshing, palatable."

I admitted it; and agreed, moreover, that the English breakfast-table was the most remarkable sample of the poverty of English invention in regard to food that could be cited by a foreigner.

"Never saw a handful of fruit anywhere—even in the height of the summer," said the Honourable Mrs. Ruggles Peck. "They never put flowers upon the table. There are none on the buffets either. Don't seem to understand it. In the very height of the strawberry season, we never saw a strawberry. Now, in this country they are more reasonable. There isn't a little railway buffet between this and Marseilles or Bordeaux, or the north coast, that is not decorated with flowers and handsome stands of fruit. And there are fifty things along the counter; drinks for the men and sweet things for the women; coffee and tea and soup always ready; beautiful grapes and pears; chocolates and candies; and cakes—as many as we could show in our own country. Same in the hotels, on the boulevards—everywhere.

"I test you by your bread," said the Honourable Mr. Ruggles Peck; "by the bread your poor eat, and that which the Frenchman, the German, and the Italian consumes. Yours is a flat, tasteless loaf, that yields very little nourishment; and still, I am aware, against any change in it the ragged Londoner would fight tooth and nail. The Irishman at the height of the famine, yelled at the benevolent people who offered him maize flour. Tell a poor weaver in Spitalfields, that he was to have rye-bread, or any new bread cheaper than the

old familiar loaf, and he would put himself in an attitude of defence."

The Honourable Mrs. Ruggles Peck again broke in for the glory of the stars and stripes:

"Then see, sir, how vegetables are treated in England. We have endless ways of preparing vegetables. I can find them only boiled plainly—and two or three varieties, not more—in England. Who ever heard there of dandelions for greens, or ate a cold cabbage salad, or understood squashes, or fried cucumbers, or salsifis—we call it the oyster plant? Salsifis toast is one of Mr. Peck's favourite dishes. Then tomato sauce! Why your English cooks have not the beginning of an idea of it. They don't know what tomato toast means, nor green melons, nor egg-plants, nor how to use rice. Their salads are disgraceful——"

"Except the lobster, my dear," Mr. Peck interposed. "Lobster salads, in some houses—mind, only in some houses—they can do, and that's a fact. But it's a plain salad after all; the excellence of the ingredients makes the dish. The sprinkling of capers, or the welcome surprise of an anchovy fillet, you seldom, if ever, see. And that's where I find fault with the English cooks. They've no invention; their taste is blunt; they are fellows of few resources. They want a whole batterie de cuisine to fry a sole and roast a fowl. Ask them what you shall have for dinner, and they haven't the ghost of a suggestion. Their waste is diabolical, in a nation which your scientific men all combine in saying is underfed. Excuse my bluntness; but that's why we Americans run through London and stay in Paris. By the way, you're great in pickles, that you are; and Crosse's thumb and Blackwell's finger cover Europe in that particular."

"Then look at our pies," the Honourable Mrs. Ruggles Peck continued. "Our pumpkin pies alone, our dried pumpkin, our grated pumpkin, our whortleberry and choke-cherry pies, our squash pie. Then we have the boiled potato pudding, boiled corn pudding, Jessie's corn pudding, rich boiled Indian pudding, tapioca and sago apple puddings, corn starch pudding, gipsy's pudding. Then Peggy's family pudding, cracked wheat pudding, hominy dessert pudding, the Southerners' and the Northerners' baked potato puddings, orange pudding, Isabella cream—creams by the score—potato blanc-mange—an excellent dainty for poor people; lemon kisses, mother's custard, four-fruit jelly, one-two-

three cake, a delicious family treat; green currant jelly——"

"The only jelly in the world, to my taste," was the Honourable Ruggles Peck's solemnly expressed opinion. "Never saw it on this side the Atlantic."

"You see, sir," continued the honourable gentleman, turning to your humble servant, "we are go-ahead in the kitchen as well as in the parlour and bureau. We're on the look-out for everything that's good, profitable, cheap, to be turned to use any way. You laughed at the French people for eating frogs: we tasted 'em, found 'em first-rate, and we're the largest consumers of them in the universe—not barring the French themselves. Frogging has become a great industry in the marshy grounds of Buffalo. We calculate that in the season some two thousand pairs of legs are eaten in Buffalo every day."

I readily agreed with the honourable gentleman that his countrymen were very far in advance of the English as explorers and experimental philosophers in the way of food. I returned to our original point in a manner that pleased him, by telling him that nothing showed the superiority of his countrymen more than the varieties in form and flavour they had contrived to give to their doughs or pastes; while the English people have remained as stationary as the Chinese.

"What they call household bread in England," Mrs. Peck said, with a little shudder, "I couldn't manage to eat anyhow. The little crusty loaves—I don't know what they call them, were better; but not what we call perfect bread by any means."

"We know it, madam," I replied. "Doctor Letheby has told us that the complete baking is best effected when loaves are baked singly, as on the Continent, and not in batches, as in England; because, in the batches the top and bottom crusts are thick and hard, while the interior of any batch is underdone. One of our busy men has collected samples of the breads of Europe, and they have been lectured upon. Another has called our attention to rye-bread, and has distributed samples of it, as it was made according to the formula of the Board of Agriculture in France, of 1795. Now this, a cheap, thoroughly wholesome and sustaining bread, is made of one part of rice and four parts of rye ground together. Baked in long rolls, so that the necessary heat may thoroughly reach through it, it makes a most nutritious and palatable bread; but it is of a dark colour. Try to

get English people to eat it; try to force them to munch it in the workhouses; and you would see a few riots. It can be made at less than a penny a pound; but make it, and see how many customers you would get, even in the east end of London. I know that when I was travelling in Sweden, I ate nothing save "flat brod," a rye bread baked like a thin biscuit, the primitive baking, which is perhaps the wisest after all our struggles of science to get together a faultless staff of life. And I liked it much."

"You must understand, sir," the Honourable Ruggles Peck said, while he selected a prodigious cigar from his case for his morning's smoke, "we have got a good deal of our variety, as well as our intrepidity as experimentalists, from the Germans; the Irish, the Indians, ay, and the Spaniards. The German is a cautious, cheap liver. Talk of living on a little: he can do it right well; but he hasn't a pretty palate. Most of the things we have got from him we could do without, that is, I and you could; but it has told well on the working classes."

"Abominable messes are the German foods, I think, Ruggles dear," said Mrs. Peck, throwing her face into a hundred wrinkles.

"They are so, my dear; but this gentleman is talking about cheap living; how poor people waste what they might eat; how they refuse good food because they are ignorant, and educated people won't teach them. It is one of the questions of the day, Mrs. Peck."

"Then I leave you to discuss it over your smoke. You don't want to know anything more about our pies, do you, sir?" the lady asked me, as she rose.

I assured her that she had already laid me under deep obligations to her for her lesson in the Sweet Art; so she left us, as she said, pleasantly, "to fight the bakers."

IX. THE FARM KITCHEN.

If the *pot-au-feu* and the *pignatta* were the only two advantages the French and Italian farmer and farm-labourer had over the British farmer and his man, the advantage of the foreigners would not be an unimportant one. Madame Marceline Michaux, in her *Farm Kitchen*, published under the authority of the minister of agriculture—a book avowedly written for small proprietors and agricultural labourers—touches at once on the *pot-au-feu*. It is the corner-stone of every economic kitchen. She pretends that her book is

written to teach workmen and labourers, and proprietors who plough their own land, how to vary—keeping economy strictly in view—the sameness and insipidity of their food. According to her, the food eaten in French farm kitchens is primitive, unvaried, and often dearer than a more varied cuisine would be. If her remark be just in its application to the farm kitchens in which I have eaten cabbage-soup, eggs brouillés, omelettes with bacon, delicious cakes of fried cream—but the list of the memories of my teeth in Brittany, Normandy, Picardy, and elsewhere would carry me far away from Madame Michaux—I say, if her remark apply to places within the range of my experience, how would she describe the diet of an English ploughman? I should surprise the reader with her idea of a monotonous and primitive kitchen. Not that you may not find scores of very poor villages in France, where coarse bread and soup are the chief fare the year round, and the villagers look weak and woebegone. I have seen, not twenty miles from Paris, hovels that could not be outmatched in Connemara. But the dwellers therein are more self-helpful than their English or Irish brothers would be in their predicament. When the new era in popular education shall have reached all the villages of France, and it shall have become possible for such simple instruction as Madame Michaux offers to penetrate the homes of the hundreds of thousands of small landowners, their condition will be speedily ameliorated, for they will prove apt scholars in an art that will teach them new methods of putting pence into the old stocking.

What a cosy, bright, argumentative body Madame Michaux is! She takes her country-folk into her confidence at once, and asks them what is the use of getting a perfect knowledge of kitchen-gardening, while the wife in-doors has not the smallest idea of cooking economically the produce of the garden. Economy in growing must be supplemented by economy in cooking. The perfect gardener should be able to hand his cabbages, peas, salads, and herbs to the perfect cook, who should hardly be at a loss for a dish, even when the family, like Mr. Thackeray's little Billee and companions, had come to the last split pea. While the gardener should be ready to grow every new vegetable presented to him by travellers, the cook should be so far above prejudice as to give it a fair trial; every item of food added to the

general stock being a benefit to humanity. Madame Michaux has her little hoard of maxims, and uses them discreetly, knowing their effect upon the bucolic mind. When she is begging her readers to buy good pots and pans, and to save a little money to this end, she tells them it is the habit of those who have very little in their purses to spend more than the rich. She describes how a workman's kitchen battery should be composed, and dwells on the waste of cheaper vessels. An iron pot is a better investment than the tin saucepan: this is the key-note.

With the observation that an earthenware vessel makes a better pot-au-feu than a metal one, and that the old pot is better by far than the new, two items of knowledge familiar to the poorest households, by the way, madame plunges into soups—soups within reach of the small farmer and some of his shepherds. Her observations on the foundation of the pot-au-feu are excellent in this, that she gives simple reasons for directions, that will appeal forcibly to her saving readers. No good broth, she insists, is obtainable by putting the beef into boiling water, because the beef contains a liquid exactly like the white of an egg. It is what learned people call albumen. If you attack it suddenly with boiling water it becomes solid, and thus it prevents the juices of the meat from escaping to form a good broth. Put the meat in cold water, and the albumen will flow into it as it warms gradually upon the fire, and the juices of the meat follow, without interruption. This is a very sensible way of putting the case before the reader; but I contend, and from experience, and after serious conversation with competent judges, that madame's is a wasteful—a shamefully wasteful process. When the meat is put upon the fire in cold water the albumen escapes, as the water warms: true. But what becomes of it? It is a valuable food. Why it rises to the surface in thick masses and the cook skims it, and throws it away—wasting a very valuable part of her pot-au-feu or bouillon.

I dined lately with an experimentalist who had heard the subject discussed. He produced as fine a bouillon, superb in the full flavour of all the juices of the meat, as civilised man could desire, and he told us that he was a convert to boiling water. All his life his bouillon had started with cold water; but he was convinced of the error of his ways, and although his cook was in despair at the change, he should

have his beef plunged for the future into boiling water.

Urbain-Dubois, in his School for Cooks, recommends the cold water plan, adding that if the skimming be not complete, the bouillon retains a disagreeable taste of albumen; and I am quite of his opinion that a pot-au-feu with a fine capon and a little veal thrown in is better than the ordinary pot. But we are in the country, among farm servants, and with a teacher who is a professor of economy. Even among people who have culture, and some experience of good things, the loss of part of the meat is improper. Give me, by all means, the pot-au-feu of the gourmet, and I will make an admirable dinner of it. But don't tell me it is an economical dish. So, I repeat, the pot-au-feu, as explained by Madame Michaux to the farmer's wife and the cantonnier's daughter, is a mistake. These cannot afford to lose the albumen, and will not be offended by—will not be conscious of—its taste.

Madame has nearly forty plain soups which she recommends to the farm kitchen, the ingredients of which are both cheap and handy on every farm. She turns lentils (why are these unknown in the poor districts of our towns?), haricots, pumpkin, leeks, sorrel, turnips, cabbages, swedes, to account, and twists her simple ingredients into new dishes with a cunning hand. She tells the labourer's wife to throw a bit of mutton into her pot, to pepper and salt well, drop in a suspicion of garlic (the Englishwoman would not be behindhand with an onion instead), and boil. When the boiling is strong she may cast in a fine cabbage, and any other vegetables that are handy. If she wants to give the family dish a savour that will commend it particularly to all, she may add a bit of bacon. With this she has a good, substantial, palatable meal for husband and children. Suppose the soup remaining not to be enough for another meal, madame recommends the housewife to scrape Dutch cheese upon slices of bread, and throw them into the dish, and pour the boiling soup upon them.

But when there is no meat at hand why should Joe's wife be utterly at a loss to give him something hot and savoury before he goes to work in the morning, or when he returns home? Madame Michaux recommends onion soup. A little fat should be thrown into the pot, followed by an onion, or even two, chopped fine, the whole to be left to brown thoroughly. When this is done, and the neighbourhood, if the neigh-

bourhood have a nose, is quite sure that it is done, pour in a jug or two of boiling water, with salt and pepper. Then give it two or three sharp turns of boiling. Have a dish at hand, upon which the onion soup is poured, as Joe returns. If a dish of potatoes be handier than bread, they will be almost as good. Or can anything be simpler than this? Throw all the crusts and stale bread into the pot, with water and a good sprinkling of salt. Presently add a little fat, dripping, or butter; let the soup boil till the bread is in a complete pulp. Two whipped eggs will improve it, or some chopped leeks, or any vegetables or seasoning within reach.

Suppose potatoes are the chief resource of the family for the moment; with a few spring onions, some sorrel, and a little chervil, a most refreshing dish may be made. But Joe's wife knows nothing about chervil, which she might grow in a corner of her garden; nor of sorrel, which she might send the boys out to pick in the fields. She is ignorant of so many herbs and vegetables which the most primitive French housewife has at her elbows, that it would be just now lost time even to run through the names of the other nutritious soups which are recommended in the Farm Kitchen.

When Madame Michaux passes on to the cooking of vegetables, she leaves Joe's wife again hopelessly in the rear. It is only here and there she can have a word with the poor Englishwoman, who has never heard of half the vegetables that are in a French kitchen garden. Madame insinuates some twenty cheap and toothsome ways of cooking cabbages, and her ideas about haricots are infinite. She can make a dish of cooked water-cresses; these are a cheap and agreeable substitute for spinach; her lettuce au jus is a delicate dish, and her lettuce stalks au blanc should be tried by the experimental philosopher. So orderly and thorough is madame, that she opens her chapter on turnips by dividing them into three categories. She has a civil word to say of onions, and of the shabby, back-stairs way people have of liking them; and then she suggests an onion salad garnished with salt herrings, and a salad of potatoes, beetroot, and onions. It seems that the parsley root, cooked like salsifis, is of fine flavour; that dandelion, either as a salad or boiled, is an excellent vegetable; and that mange-tout peas are a precious resource for the housewife. On potatoes madame reads farmers' and workmen's wives a lecture, telling them the baked is more valuable than the boiled,

and that Belgian housewives set a good example to their French sisters in carefully peeling potatoes, instead of wastefully cutting off the skin, the part nearest the skin being the better part. Madame's suggestions for making good dishes with potatoes and a few herbs would revolutionise a poor Irish family.

It is true, as madame says, that in France there are salads to any taste, of any form, and of every colour. But try to teach a countryman in England to eat a mallow salad, or one of dandelion and chervil! He begins and ends with a lettuce. Even this he cannot mix properly. Madame tells him that lettuce, with a little vinegar, salt, and melted bacon fat, will make him a good dish. A salad of hard eggs and water-cresses is recommended. From vegetables and salads the farmer's gracious guide travels through fish, flesh, and fowl, offering, by the way, a hundred suggestions for contriving new dishes out of the simplest materials. Her omelettes are a little book in themselves. The confidence with which she recommends her dainty combinations to her poor countrymen, shows the knowledge of culinary matters which they have already, and how apt are the scholars to whom she appeals. She has in view exclusively the French ménagères who have the old domestic proverb hanging somewhere near the festoon of dried carrots (for the soup), "Tout vient à point qui tient ménage." Her hope of success lies in the general resolve to save, out of the hardest life, something to cover old bones in the setting sun.

This resolve is very curiously illustrated in the domestic economy proverbs of French country people. You must be able to save a pear until you are thirsty. The house is built with farthings. You must not buy your wood or your coal when it freezes. Three movings are equivalent to a fire. Provide in the summer for the winter, if you would avoid want. Proverbs of this kind are ever on the lips of the working French, and this concentration of their minds on the principle of saving keeps them alive to every suggestion that gives promise of economy. The French peasant was easily taught, by Monsieur Raspail, to drink borage tea, and to delight in the aroma of it.

Let any social doctor who may be anxious to test the pliability of the English agricultural labourer, as a pupil, accost him with the following proposition: "My good man, I have, I assure you, from the bottom of my heart the liveliest interest in your

velfare. Now the tea you drink is delectable, adulterated, and very dear stuff. It does you no good: now take my advice, grow borage, which will cost you nothing, and drink borage tea. It helps digestion, is a sudorific, has a delightful aroma, and will have no bad effects on your nerves, or the nerves of your wife."

I am lost in conjectures as to the fate that would befall the doctor. He might be knocked, elbowed into a brier hedge, reminded that the horse-pond was near, or recommended to confine his attention to his own tea-cup. But the unlikeliest result of all would be thanks for his suggestion. No, the unlikeliest would be the trial of it!

A MEDIÆVAL HARMONIC SOCIETY.

In the year 1299, one Henry de Waleys registered a deed in the Court of Common Pleas, granting to the brotherhood of the Pui five marks of annual quit-rent, to be received from all his tenements in London, towards the support of one chaplain to celebrate divine service in the new chapel at the Guildhall of London. The brotherhood of the Pui does not sound very jovially to the ear, smacking more of monkery than merriment. It was, however, nothing more or less than an association of good fellows who liked to hear a very good song very well sung; in fact, a Mediæval Harmonic Society. Whence it took its name, is as uncertain as the date of its coming into being. Societies of the same kind existed in Amiens, Abbeville, Rouen, Dieppe, and Caen; and the English brotherhood may have christened themselves after Le Puy, the capital of the department of the Haute-Loire, which rejoiced in the possession of a miraculous statue of the Virgin, or the word Pui may, as Monsieur Brueil contends, refer merely to the stage erected for the singers at the annual festival.

Mr. Riley supposes the London society to have been founded by foreign merchants frequenting the English fairs and markets; but the notion is scarcely reconcilable with the fact that its statutes declare it to have been established, "In honour of God, our Lady Saint Mary, and all saints, both male and female, and in honour of our Lord the King, and all the Barons of the country." Spite of this parade of holy names, the brotherhood of the Pui was by no means a sacred harmonic society, for it held that the chief purpose of song was the glorifying of woman; while its professed end and

aim was that the City of London might be renowned for all good things in all places; that mirth, courteous solace, joy, gladness, honesty, peace, gaiety, and good love might be maintained; afflictions obliterated, and wrath, rancour, crime, and vice annihilated.

The society seems to have been open to all, nothing being required of a would-be brother save that he paid down sixpence, and bound himself, so long as there should be five companions to make the sixth, to obey all lawful orders of the Pui, and to aid and counsel his fellows in "all points and in all places" save against the peace and crown of the king. Any offence that way entailing expulsion, the community desiring to have nought to do with such as might cause the good companions to be accused and defamed. Furthermore, he was expected to attend every meeting of the brotherhood, or show good cause for his absence. If he took a wife unto himself, he was bound to give notice that he was about to marry, in order that the companions might see him to church and home again, taking care to provide a bridal chaplet for one and all. If ill unto death the prince of the Pui visited him, to impress upon him the duty of remembering the fraternity in his will, according to his means; and when he was dead the brethren bore him to his grave.

Once a year, upon a certain Sunday, the brotherhood held their great meeting, called the Festival of the Pui, when a new prince was chosen and the best song crowned. The responsibility of naming the new prince devolved upon the reigning one, but his selection had to be ratified by eleven companions making oath that the person so honoured was a good, loyal, and sufficient companion. The ceremony of installation was extremely simple. "The old prince and his companions shall go through the room, from one end to the other, singing, and the old prince shall carry the crown of the Pui upon his head, and a gilt cup full of wine in his hands. And when they shall have gone round, the old prince shall give to drink unto him whom they shall have chosen, and shall give him the crown, and such person shall be prince." Then the blazon of arms of the new prince was hung upon the wall, and under it, plainly and correctly written, a copy of the crowned song of the year; "for no singer by right ought to sing any royal song, or to proffer the same, until he shall have seen the song that was last crowned, the year past, honoured according to its right."

The rules relating to the musical competition are not very clearly expressed, but as we understand them, ordered it to be conducted thus. The songs were first handed over to two or three companions understanding music and singing, who critically examined the notes and points of each competition, as well as the nature of the words; bearing in mind that "without singing, no one ought to call a composition of words a song." All that passed this preliminary test were sung in turn before a jury composed of the two princes and fifteen companions, sworn to give a true and honest verdict, "not for love, for hate, for gift, for promise, for neighbourhood, for kindred, or any acquaintanceship old or new, nor yet for anything else." The successful song was then duly crowned, the crown becoming the property of its author. The competition decided, the modest banquet was served. This was provided by the prince, but not at his own expense. Each companion paid twelve pence for his dinner; if absent on urgent private affairs, he still had to pay, but if he lived in the City, his share of the good things was sent to his house; if he dwelt beyond the walls, he received nothing, and was let off with a fourpenny fine. When the expenses exceeded the receipts, those who dined made up the difference between them. Dinner despatched, the companions mounted their horses to ride in procession through the City, the hero of the day riding between the past and present princes. Upon reaching the new prince's abode, every one alighted, joined in a dance, by way of hearty good-bye, drank one drink, and then away on foot to his own home. No strangers were permitted to take part in the proceedings at the festival; if any such were detected, they were compelled either to enrol themselves in the society, or take themselves off. Ladies were excluded by a special clause, ingeniously contrived to make it appear that the prohibition sprang rather from an excess of gallantry than any want of it. "Although the becoming pleasance of virtuous ladies is a rightful theme and principal occasion for royal singing, and for composing and furnishing royal songs, nevertheless it is hereby provided that no lady or other woman ought to be at the great sitting of the Pui, for the reason that the companions ought hereby to take example and rightful warning, to honour, cherish, and commend all ladies, at all times, in all places, as much in their absence as in their presence.

And this breeding requires, and all good propriety."

In course of time abuses crept into the society, and it became necessary to alter and amend its statutes. The princes had been tempted to vie with each other in liberality, waxing so extravagant that many members withdrew from the fraternity for fear of the burden being thrust upon their shoulders. To remedy this it was enacted, that the dining-hall should no more be draped in cloth of gold, silk, or tapestry, but only decked with leaves, strewn with fresh rushes, and dressed out with bankers (cushions). The viands were to be limited to good bread, good ale, good wine, pottage, one course of solid meat, a double roast, cheese, and no more; and the prince was forbidden to follow on with a supper that night, or a dinner the next day. The prince might appear in costume, at his own charge, if he affected no more than a coat and surcoat, without sleeves, and a mantle of one suit; the last to be surrendered with the crown to his successor. He was no longer to rule the society according to his sole pleasure. Twelve of the richest and most active resident companions, able and willing to attend to the business, were to be chosen to manage its affairs, so that the prince should do nothing without the sanction of at least two of them. At the same time, the feast-day was fixed for the Sunday next after the Feast of Trinity; the old fixture, coming between the fair of St. Ives and other great fairs, being inconvenient for merchants frequenting fairs.

Every festival-day, while the royal songs were being sung, six of the council of twelve were to retire into an adjacent room and audit the accounts of the feast, so that each companion might pay his share before he departed, or the next day at the latest. The revision of the rules was not, however, all on the side of economy. A clerk was to be engaged at a salary of twenty shillings sterling, whose duty was, to be found at all hours, to keep a record of all non-attendances, and register the address of every companion. A chaplain was to be paid to be "always singing mass" for the souls of the companions, living and dead. A fifty-pound wax candle was to be found every year, to be borne before the companions when they went to the chapel of Our Lady in St. Martin's-le-Grand, to entreat her protection; and, finally, it was resolved to build a chapel of their own, near the Guildhall. These sup-

plementary articles of association conclude thus: "If the statutes be not well kept, and reasonably holden, all the fraternity will fall asunder, without doubt, in a short time—the which may God in His kind mercy forbid. Amen." When the fraternity did fall asunder it is impossible to say, but it was hardly likely to withstand the shock of such troublous times as followed upon the death of Edward the First. Harmony, perforce, went to the wall when discord shook the realm, and we shall not err very greatly in concluding that the joyous brotherhood of the Pui was done to death by civil strife, much as it deserved a better fate.

THE YELLOW FLAG.

By EDMUND YATES,

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "NOBODY'S FORTUNE," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER IX. PAULINE'S CALCULATIONS.

WHEN they reached the street, Humphrey Statham stopped short, and turning to Martin, said, "You had better see Mrs. Claxton to her home. The excitement of the day has been too much for her, and the sooner she is under the fostering care of Madame Du Tertre—it seems impossible for me to call her by any other name—the less chance there will be of her suffering any ill effects."

"Will you not go with us?" asked Martin, looking directly at his friend for the first time since the dread explanation concerning Emily Mitchell had passed between them, and still speaking with nervous trepidation; "will you not go with us?"

"No," replied Humphrey, "not now; there is something which I think ought to be done, and I am the proper person to do it."

His manner was so odd that both Alice and Martin were struck by it at once, and the latter, taking Humphrey by the arm, drew him aside for a moment and said:

"I have an idea of what now fills your mind, and of the errand on which you are going. You will not suffer yourself to run into any danger?"

"Danger!"

"I repeat the word—danger! Life has a new happiness in store for you now, Humphrey Statham, and should consequently be more precious than you have ever yet considered it."

His voice had regained its usual clear

tone, and as he spoke he looked frankly in his friend's eyes. In the gaze which met his own, Martin saw that the deadly wrong which he had unwittingly wrought upon his companion was forgiven, and had he doubted it, the grasp with which his hand was seized would have been sufficient proof.

"Don't fear for me," said Humphrey, his face glowing with delight at the idea which Martin's words had aroused; "depend upon it I will run no risks, and neither by word nor act give a chance by which I or others could be compromised. But it is necessary that a word of warning should be spoken in a certain quarter, with energy and promptitude. So, for the present, farewell."

He turned to Alice as he finished speaking, and raising his hat was about to move away. But she put out her hand to him, and said, with pretty becoming hesitation, "I cannot thank you as I ought, Mr. Statham, for the manner in which you have just pleaded my cause with—with that lady, any more than I can show my gratitude for the constant kindness I have met with at your hands."

Humphrey Statham attempted to make a reply, but gave utterance to nothing. The words failed him, and, for the first time in his life perhaps, he was fairly nonplussed. As the sweet young voice rang on his ear, as he felt the pressure of the warm soft hand, a strange vibration ran through him, and he knew himself on the point of giving way to an exhibition of feeling, the possibility of which a few months previously he would have laughed to scorn. So with a bow and a smile he turned on his heel and hurried rapidly away.

Martin watched his friend's departing figure for a moment, then, with a half-sigh, he said to his companion, "I am glad that you spoke your thanks to Humphrey so warmly, Alice, for he has been your truest and best friend."

"Rather say one of them," said Alice, laying her hand lightly on his arm; "you take no credit to yourself, Mr. Gurwood."

The colour had faded from his cheeks, and from his compressed lips, ere he replied coldly, "I take as much as is my due. Now let me call a cab and take you home, for on our way there I have something more to say to you."

"Something more," she cried, with a frightened air. "Oh, Mr. Gurwood, nothing more dreadful, I hope; nothing that——"

"Do you imagine for an instant that I would put you to unnecessary suffering," he said, almost tenderly, looking down into her pleading upturned eyes; "that I, or any of us, would not shield you from any possible annoyance? No: what I have to say to you will, I think, be rather pleasant to you than otherwise. Here is the cab; I will tell you as we go along."

When they were seated in the vehicle, Martin said to his companion: "You have now, Alice, had Madame Du Tertre for your friend quite long enough to judge of her disposition, and to know whether the desire to serve your interests, which she originally professed, was dictated by a spirit of regard for you, or merely assumed to serve her own purposes."

"There can be no question in the matter," said Alice, almost indignantly; "nothing can exceed the devotion which Pauline has exhibited to me ever since we came together. She is infinitely more like an elder sister to me than a person whose acquaintance I seem to have made by the merest chance."

"There is often more than chance in these matters," said Martin, gravely; "more than there seems to be in the chance use of a word. You have said that Pauline has seemed to you as an elder sister—suppose she really stood to you in that position?"

"That could scarcely be," said Alice; "for years and years I had no relation but my poor brother, and since his death——"

"Since his death Providence has sent some one to fill his place much more efficiently than he ever filled it himself, so far as you are concerned, my poor child," said Martin.

And then he told her what had occurred between them and Pauline at Statham's office, omitting, of course, all reference to the jealous feelings by which the Frenchwoman had at first been actuated, and dwelling upon the self-sacrifice and devotion with which she had espoused her kinswoman's cause.

Alice was much touched at this narrative, and when they reached home she embraced Pauline with such tenderness, that the latter knew at once that her story had been told; knew, too, that Martin had been silent about the incidents of her early life and the reasons which had originally prompted her to throw herself in Alice's way, and was proportionately grateful to him.

Late that night, when they were together, Alice lying in her bed and Pauline sitting by her side, the two women had a long,

earnest, and affectionate talk, in the course of which the strange events which the day had brought to light came under discussion. It was evident to Pauline that Alice had braced herself up to talk of her own position, and of the deception of which she had been the victim; but the Frenchwoman saw that her companion was in no condition to bear the excitement which such a topic would necessarily evoke, and gradually, but skilfully, drew her away from it. The case, however, was different when Alice depicted the rage and consternation of Mrs. Calverley at learning the part taken by her son in the concealment of the Claxton mystery. This was a point in which Pauline took the keenest interest, and she induced Alice to dilate on it at her will, framing her questions with much subtlety, and pondering over each answer she received. When Alice stated Mrs. Calverley's intention of disinheriting her son, and leaving him to struggle on in the comparatively obscure position which he then occupied, something like a ray of light shot into Pauline's darkened soul. Should the intention thus announced be carried out, should Martin be left to his own resources, she might then have the chance, such as never could occur to her under other circumstances, of proving her disinterested love for him. For the man of wealth, for the man even with great expectations, she could do nothing; any advances which she might make, any assistance which she might offer, the world would but regard as so much small bait thrown out for the purpose of securing a greater booty; and he, knowing as he did the circumstances of her previous life, the scheming, predatory manner of her early existence, would too surely be of the opinion of the world. But if he were poor, and broken, and humbled, grieving over the alienation of his mother, and feeling himself solitary and shunned, her self-appointed task in winning him, in proving to him her devotion, in placing at his disposal the small means which she had, the worldly talent which even he acknowledged she possessed, would be a very much easier one.

"Mistress of her own fortune, and would continue to remain so; that is what she said, is it?" Pauline asked, after a pause.

"That is what she said, and that she renounced her son, and revoked all the declarations she had hitherto made in his favour," said Alice. "Was it not dreadful for poor Mr. Gurwood? I do pity him so."

"Do you?" said Pauline, turning her searching gaze full upon the girl's face. "Yes, I dare say you do. It is natural you should do; Mr. Gurwood has been a good friend to you."

"The best—almost the best—I had in the world."

"Almost the best! Why, who could rank equal with him?"

"Mr. Gurwood himself said Mr. Statham," cried Alice, with downcast eyes.

"Ay, ay," said Pauline quickly. Then, after an interval of a few minutes, the old cynical spirit coming over her, she added, more as if talking to herself than to her companion, "I don't think we need trouble ourselves much, for Mr. Gurwood's sake, about that old woman's threat. I know her well; she is hard and cold and proud; but with all those charming qualities, and like many of your rigid English Pharisees, she is superstitious to a degree. She dare not make a will for fear of dying immediately she had signed her name to it; and if she dies without a will, her son inherits all her property. *Vogue la galère!* Mr. Gurwood's chances are not so bad after all. There," she added, in a softened voice, seeing Alice gazing at her in astonishment, "get to sleep, now, child; you have had a long and trying day, and must be quite wearied out."

Alice fell asleep almost immediately, but for more than an hour afterwards Pauline sat with her feet on the fender gazing into the slowly dying embers and pondering over the circumstances by which she was surrounded. "What was that Alice had said, that she so pitied Martin Gurwood? Yes, those were the words, and pity was akin to love." But the expression on her face when she spoke had, as Pauline had noticed, nothing significant or tell-tale in it. Was there anything in the suspicion concerning Alice and Martin which had once crossed her mind? She thought not, she hoped not. And yet, what interest had she in that? There was but little chance that this one real passion of her life, her love for this quiet sedate young clergyman, this man so different in manner, thought, and profession from any other she had ever known—there was but little chance that her devotion would be recognised by or even known to him. Well, even in this world justice is sometimes meted out, as Père Gosselin used to tell her—ah, grand Dieu, how far away in the mists of ages seem Père Gosselin and the chapel of Notre Dame de la Garde and all the old Marseilles life!—and so she supposes she ought

not to expect much happiness, and with a shrug of her shoulders, and a wearied sigh, Pauline crept silently to her bed.

CHAPTER X. MR. WETTER IS INTERVIEWED.

WHEN Mr. Wetter, at the conclusion of his interview with Alice, took his departure from Pollington-terrace, he found himself unexpectedly with some spare time upon his hands. The result of that interview had been so different to what he had anticipated, his preconceived arrangement had been so rudely overthrown, that he was almost unable at first to realise his position, and was in some doubt as to the nature of the next steps it would be best for him to take.

"A most unsatisfactory and ridiculous conclusion," said he to himself, dropping from the hurried steps with which he had quitted the house into a more leisurely pace; "most unsatisfactory and highly ridiculous, to think that a man of my experience, who has been in the habit of treating matters of this kind for so many years, and with so many different styles of persons, should allow himself to be shut up and put down by that mild-spoken innocent, is beyond all powers of comprehension. I suppose it was because she was innocent that I gave way. I had expected something so completely different, that when it dawned upon me that she was speaking the truth, and that she actually had believed herself to be that old rascal's wife, I was so taken aback, that my usual *savoir-faire* completely deserted me. No doubt about the fact, though I think women's attempts at innocence are generally spoiled by being overdone; but this seemed in every way to be the genuine article. What a scoundrel must that Calverley have been! This is just another instance of those men who are so highly respectable, and looked up to as patterns of all the domestic virtues, turn out after death to have been the most consummate hypocrites and shams, and infinitely worse than most of us, who, because we are less circumspect, have obtained the reputation of being black sheep. I myself never went in for being particularly straitlaced, but certainly I was never guilty of such a cold-blooded piece of villany as that perpetrated by the respectable patriarch of Great Walpole-street.

"What an idiot I was not to have recognised at once that a person of her appearance and manner could not be what she seemed, not to have discovered that she was in a false position, and ignorant herself of what must have been thought about

her! Then, of course, I should have approached her in a different manner, made other plans equally easy of execution and far more certain of success. What an idiot I am," he continued, striking his cane with vehemence against the ground, "to think about her any more! There are hundreds of women quite as pretty and far more fascinating who would be only too well pleased to receive any attention from me, so why do I worry myself about one who has given me such a decided rebuff? Why? Most likely from the fact that that very rebuff has given piquancy to the adventure, that I am disinclined, because unaccustomed, to sit down under a sense of failure, and because—there!—because she seems to have bewitched me, and at my time of life, with all my experience, I am as much in love with her as if I were a boy suffering under my first passion."

With a gesture of contempt for his own folly, Mr. Wetter called a cab, and caused himself to be conveyed to his lodgings in South Audley-street, whence, at the expiration of a quarter of an hour, he issued to mount his horse, which he had ordered to be brought round to him, and to ride off at a sharp pace. Whither? With the one idea of Alice dominant in his mind, he thought he would like to see once more the spot to which his attention had once been attracted to; and though he had not much daylight before him, he turned his horse's head in the direction of Hendon.

Daylight was in truth beginning to wane, and Miss M'Craw, who was true to her old habits, and kept up as strict a system of espionage upon the family of the American gentleman, then domiciled in Rose Cottage, as ever she had upon Alice and John Calverley, was thinking of retiring from her post of observation at the window, when the figures of the horseman and his chestnut thoroughbred, which had formerly been so familiar to her, once more met her view.

Miss M'Craw strained almost out of the window with astonishment. "What on earth has brought him back after so long an absence?" she said to herself. "He cannot possibly be going to call upon those horrible American people."

From her employment of this adjective, it will be gathered that Miss M'Craw did not cherish a particularly friendly feeling towards the new occupants of Rose Cottage. The fact was that her inquisitiveness and propensity to scandal came speedily under the observation of Mr. Hiram B. Crocker, the American gentleman in question, who described them under the

head of "general cussedness," declined the acquaintance of Miss M'Craw, and had huge boardings built up in the corners of his grounds for the purpose of intercepting her virgin gaze.

No, the equestrian was not going to call at Rose Cottage, did not stop at the gate, but rode slowly on until he reined in his horse in the accustomed spot on the brow of the hill, and, raising himself in his stirrups, stood for an instant looking into the garden. He remembered then how he had first seen her tending her flowers, and looking eagerly out evidently awaiting the arrival of some one, and how, in a subsequent ramble, he had discovered that some one to be John Calverley, of Great Walpole-street, and all that had happened therefrom.

"How well the cards lay to my hand at one time," he said to himself, with an impatient gesture; "and what a mess I have made of the game!" And with that he shook his horse's bridle and cantered away.

When Mr. Wetter reached South Audley-street, he found his groom standing on the kerb-stone, and a gentleman in the act of knocking at the door. Alighting, he found this gentleman, to his great astonishment, to be Mr. Humphrey Statham, and at sight of him an uneasy pang shot through Mr. Wetter's mind. Humphrey Statham was, as he knew, an intimate friend of Mrs. Claxton's, and his visit there was doubtless on business connected with her. If she had described the scene which had passed between them that morning, that business would doubtless be of a very unpleasant character, and Mr. Wetter was not a brave man physically. He had borne in his time a vast amount of moral obloquy, and borne it well; but he had a horror of anything like physical pain, and Humphrey Statham was a big, strong, and resolute man. No wonder, therefore, that the article which did Mr. Wetter duty for a conscience quailed within him, or that he felt sorely uncomfortable when he recognised the visitor on his doorstep.

But he was the last man to give any early outward sign of such emotion, and it was in sprightly tones and with an air of easy jauntiness that he said:

"My dear Mr. Statham, I congratulate myself immensely on having returned so exactly in the nick of time, if, as I imagine, you were about to do me the honour of paying me a visit."

"I was coming to call upon you, Mr. Wetter," said Statham, simply.

"Then pray walk in," said Wetter,

opening the door with his key, and following closely after him up the stairs. "Take that chair; you will find it, I think, a particularly comfortable one; and," going to an old oak sideboard, "let me give you an appetiser, a petit verre of absinthe or vermouth. They are both here, and either of them is a most delicious antepandial specific."

"No, thank you," said Humphrey Statham; "I will not drink with you."

Whether intentionally or not, he laid such stress on the last words that Mr. Wetter looked up at him for an instant with flashing eyes. But his voice was quite calm when, a minute after, he said, "I will not attempt to over-persuade you against your will. There is no such mistaken hospitality as that. And now, as a man of your business habits does not waste his time without a purpose, I will inquire the object of this visit."

"It is not one into which business enters, in the strict sense of the word," said Statham.

"So much the better," said Mr. Wetter, with a gay smile. "What is not a visit of business must be a visit of pleasure."

"I hope you will find it so," said Statham, grimly. "Its object, so far as I am concerned, is very easily stated. You were at Mrs. Claxton's to-day?"

"I was," said Wetter, putting a bold face on the matter.

"And when there you thought it expedient to your purpose, and being expedient for your purpose, not below your dignity as a man, to subject your hostess for the time to the grossest insult that could be passed upon any one."

"Sir!" cried Wetter, springing up.

"Be patient, Mr. Wetter, please," said Humphrey Statham, calmly; "I have a great deal more to say. This lady had been made the victim of a most shameful, most diabolical fraud—the innocent victim, mind, of a fraud which robbed her of her good name, and blasted her position among honest men and women. She was ignorant as well as innocent; she knew not how basely she had been deceived; her friends kindly conspired to hide from her the blackness of her surroundings, and to keep her, poor child, in a fool's paradise of her own. And they succeeded until you came."

"I was the serpent, in point of fact, in this fool's paradise that you speak of."

"The character fits you to a nicety, Mr. Wetter, and you kept up the allegory by opening the eyes of the woman, and causing her to know the position she occupied! Which was a genial, gentlemanly, generous act!"

"Look here," said Mr. Wetter, "there is a certain amount of right in what you say, though you are sufficiently hard upon me! I give you my word that when I spoke to Mrs. Claxton I fully believed that she knew perfectly well the position she was occupying, and had accepted it of her own free will."

"Do you believe that now?"

"No, I do not; I am a tolerably good hand at reading character, and there was something in her look and manner which convinced me that her statement, that she really believed Calverley to be Claxton, and imagined herself to be his wife, was true."

"And yet you had the insolence to offer her——"

"Don't let us use harsh words, please, Mr. Statham. This is all very fine talking, but the fact remains the same. This lady was John Calverley's mistress; nothing can put that aside or blot that out. What I proposed to do was, to make her very rich, and happy, and comfortable. Could a man be found who would do any more? Is there any one who would be such a fool as to marry her?"

"Yes," said Humphrey Statham, rising from his seat and confronting his companion; "yes, Mr. Wetter," he said, speaking very slowly, "there is one man whose dearest hope in life is to marry Alice Claxton. You are a man of the world, Mr. Wetter, and having said that much, I need add nothing to make you understand that it will be best and safest for you to respect her for the future. I came here this evening to impress this upon you, and having done so, I take my leave. Good-night."

And as he walked out, he saw by the expression of Mr. Wetter's face that no further interference on the part of that gentleman was to be looked for.

Early in December will be published the

**EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER FOR
CHRISTMAS, 1872,**

ENTITLED

DOOM'S DAY CAMP.

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THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 210. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1872.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE DOGS AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER XXIV. ARRIVALS.

LAURA had not waited any longer than I for a special justification of a letter. She had nothing to say, and she said it in a letter as long as my own, which reached me at breakfast next morning.

Sitting in a spacious room, looking out into a quiet fashionable street, in a house all of whose decorations and arrangements had an air of cold elegance and newness, the letter with the friendly Cardyllion post-mark on it seemed to bring with it something of the clear air, the homely comfort, and free life of Malory, and made me yearn all the more for the kind faces, the old house, and beloved scenery I had left behind.

It was insufferably dull here, and I soon found myself in that state which is described as not knowing what to do with oneself.

For two days no further letter from Laura reached me. On the third, I saw her well-known handwriting on the letter that awaited me on the breakfast-table. As I looked, as people will, at the direction before opening the envelope, I was struck by the post-mark, "Liverpool," and turning it over and over, I nowhere saw Cardyllion.

I began to grow too uncomfortable to wait longer; I opened the letter with misgivings. At the top of the note there was nothing written but the day of the week. It said:

MY DEAREST ETHEL,—A sudden and total change in my unhappy circumstances, separates me from you. It is impossible that I should go to London now; and it is

possible that I may not see you again for a long time, if ever. I write to say farewell; and in doing so to solemnly repeat my warning against permitting the person who obtained a few days' shelter in the steward's house, after the shipwreck, to maintain even the slightest correspondence or acquaintance with you. Pray, dearest Ethel, trust me in this. I implore of you to follow my advice. You may hear from me soon again. In the mean time, I am sure you will be glad to know that your poor governess is happy; happier than she ever desired, or ever hoped to be. My fond love is always yours, and my thoughts are hourly with you.

Ever your loving

LAURA GREY.

May God for ever bless you, darling! Good-bye.

I don't think I could easily exaggerate the effect of this letter. I will not weary you with that most tiresome of all relations, an account of another person's grief.

Mamma and papa arrived that evening. If I had lived less at Malory, and more with mamma, I should not, in some points, have appreciated her so highly. When I saw her, for the first time, after a short absence, I was always struck by her beauty and her elegance, and it seemed to me that she was taller than I recollected her.

She was looking very well, and so young!

I saw papa but for a moment. He went to his room immediately to dress, and then went off to his club.

Mamma took me to her room, where we had tea. She said I had grown, and was very much pleased with my looks. Then she told me all her plans about me. I was to have masters, and I was not to come out till April.

She then got me to relate all the circumstances of Nelly's death, and cried a good deal. Then she had in her maid Lexley, and they held a council together over me on the subject of dress.

My Malory wardrobe, from which I had brought up to town with me what I considered an unexceptionable selection, was not laughed at, was not even discussed; it was simply treated as non-extant. It gave me a profound sense of the barbarism in which I had lived.

Laura Grey's letter lay heavy at my heart, but I had not yet mentioned it to mamma. There was no need, however, to screw my courage to that point. Among the letters brought up to her was one from Laura.

When she read it she was angry in her querulous way. She threw herself into a chair in a pet. She had confidence in Laura Grey, and foresaw a good deal of trouble to herself in this desertion. "I am so particularly unfortunate!" she began; "everything that can possibly go wrong! everything that never happens to any one else! I could have got her to take you to Monsieur Pontet's, and your drives, and to shop—and—she must be a most unprincipled person. She had no right to go away as she has done. It is too bad! Your papa allows every one of that kind to treat me exactly as they please, and really, when I am at home, my life is one continual misery! What am I to do now? I don't believe any one else was ever so entirely at the mercy of her servants. I don't know, my dear, how I can possibly do all that is to be done for you without assistance; and *there* was a person I thought I could depend upon. A total stranger I should not like; and really, for anything I can see at present, I think you must go back again to Malory, and do the best you can. I am not a strong person. I was not made for all this, and I really feel I could just go to my bed, and cry till morning."

My heart had been very full, and I was relieved by this opportunity of crying.

"I wonder at your crying about so good-for-nothing a person," exclaimed mamma, impatiently. "If she had cared the least about you, she could not have left you as she has done. A satisfactory person, certainly, that young lady has turned out!"

Notwithstanding all this, mamma got over her troubles, and engaged a dull and even-tempered lady, named Anna Maria Pounden, whose manners were quiet and unexceptionable, and whose years were about

fifty. She was not much of a companion for me, you may suppose. She answered, however, very well for all purposes intended by mamma. She was lady-like and kind, and seemed made for keeping keys, arranging drawers, packing boxes, and taking care of people when they were ill. She spoke French, besides, fluently, and with a good accent, and mamma insisted that she and I should always talk in that language.

All the more persistently for this change, my thoughts were with my beloved friend, Laura Grey.

From Malory, Rebecca Torkill told me, in a rather incoherent letter, the particulars of Laura Grey's departure from Malory. She had gone out for a walk, leaving her things half-packed, for she was to go from Malory next day.

She did not return; but a note reached Mrs. Torkill, next morning, telling her simply that she could not return; and that she would write to mamma and to me in London, the same day. Mrs. Torkill's note, like mine, had the Liverpool post-mark; and her conjecture was thus expressed: "I don't think, miss, she had no notions to leave that way when she went out. It must to have bin something sudding. She went fest, I do sepose to olyhed, and thens to Liverpule in one off them pakkats. Mr. Williams, the town-clerk, and the vicar and his lady, and Doctor Mervyn is all certing sure it could be no other wise."

Mamma did not often come down to breakfast, during her short stay at this unseasonable time of year in town. On one of those rare occasions, however, something took place that I must describe.

Mamma was in a pretty morning negligée, as we used to call such careless dresses then, looking as delicately pretty as the old china tea-cups before her. Papa was looking almost as perplexingly young as she, and I made up the little party to the number of the Graces.

Mamma must have been forty, and I really don't think she looked more than two-and-thirty. Papa looked about five-and-thirty; and I think he must have been at least ten years older than he looked. That kind of life that is supposed to wear people out, seemed for them to have had an influence like the elixir vite; and I certainly have seen rustics, in the full enjoyment of mountain breezes, simple fare, and early hours, look many a day older than their years. The old rule, so harped upon, that "early to bed and early to rise" is the secret of perpetual youth, I don't

dispute; but then, if it be early to go to bed at sunset in winter, say four in the evening, and to rise at four in the morning, is it not still earlier to anticipate that hour, and go to bed at four in the morning and get up at one in the afternoon? At all events, I know that this mode of life seemed to agree with papa and mamma. I don't think, indeed, that either suffered much from the cares that poison enjoyment, and break down strength. Mamma threw all hers unexamined upon papa; who threw all his with equal nonchalance upon Mr. Norman, a kind of factotum, secretary, comptroller, diplomatist, financier, and every other thing that comes within the words "making oneself generally useful."

I never knew exactly what papa had a year to live upon. Mamma had money also. But they were utterly unfit to manage their own affairs, and I don't think they ever tried.

Papa had his worries now and then; but they seldom seemed to last more than a day, or at most a week or two. There were a number of what he thought small sums, varying from two to five thousand pounds, which under old settlements dropped in opportunely, and extricated him. These sums ought to have been treated not as income, but as capital, as I heard a monied man of business say long after; but papa had not the talent of growing rich, or even of continuing rich, if a good fairy had gifted him with fortune.

Papa was in a reverie, leaning back in his chair; mamma yawned over a letter she was reading; I was drumming some dance music with my fingers on my knee under the table-cloth, when suddenly he said to mamma:

"You don't love your Aunt Lorrimer very much?"

"No; I don't love her; I never said I did, did I?"

"No; but I mean, you don't like her; you don't care about her?"

"No," said mamma, languidly, and looking wonderingly at him with her large pretty eyes. "I don't very much; I don't quite know; I have an affection for her."

"You don't love her, and you don't even like her, but you have an affection for her," laughed papa.

"You are so teasing! I did not say that; what I mean is, she has a great many faults and oddities, and I don't like them; but I have an affection for her; why should it seem so odd to you, that one should care

for one's relations? I do feel that for her, and there let it rest."

"Well, but it ought not to rest there—as you do like her."

"Why, dear—have you heard anything of her?"

"No; but there is one thing I should not object to hear about her just now."

"One thing? What do you mean, dear?"

"That she had died, and left us her money. I know what a brute I am, and how shocked you are; but I assure you we rather want it at this moment. You write to her, don't you?"

"N-not very often. Once since we saw her at Naples."

"Well, that certainly is not very often," he laughed. "But she writes to you; you thought she seemed rather to like us—I mean you?"

"Yes."

"She has no one else to care about that I know of. I don't pretend to care about her; I think her an old fool."

"She isn't that, dear," said mamma, quietly.

"I wish we knew where she is now; seriously, you ought to write to her a little oftener, dear; I wish you would."

"I'll write to her, certainly, as soon as I am a little more myself. I could not do it just to-day; I have not been very well, you know."

"Oh! my darling, I did not mean to hurry you; of course not, till you feel perfectly well; don't suppose I could be such a monster; but—I don't want, of course, to pursue her—but there is a middle course between that, and having to drop her. She really has no one else, poor old thing, to care about, or to care about her; not that I care about her, but you're her kinswoman, and I don't see why——"

At this moment the door opened, and there entered, with the air of an assumed intimacy, and a certain welcome, a person whom I little expected to see there. I saw him with a shock. It was the man with the fine eyes and great forehead, the energetic gait, and narrow shoulders. The grim, mean-looking, intelligent, agreeable man of fifty, Mr. Droqville.

CHAPTER XXV. THE DOCTOR'S NEWS.

"OH! how do you do, Doctor Droqville?" said mamma, with a very real welcome in looks and accent.

"How d'ye do, Droqville?" said my father, a little dryly, I fancied.

"Have you had your breakfast?" asked mamma.

"Two hours ago."

"We are very late here," said papa.

"I should prefer thinking I am very early, in my primitive quarters," answered Mr. Droqville.

"I had not an idea we should have found you in town, just now."

"In season or out of season, a physician should always be at his post. I'm beginning to learn rather late there's some truth in that old proverb about moss, you know, and rolling-stones, and it costs even a bachelor something to keep body and soul together in this mercenary, tailoring, cutlet-eating world." At this moment he saw me, and made me a bow.

"Miss Ware?" he said, a little inquiringly to mamma. "Yes, I knew perfectly it was the young lady I had seen at Malory. Some faces are not easily forgotten," he added gallantly, with a glance at me. "I threatened to run away with her, but she was firm as fate," he smiled and went on, "and I paid a visit to our friend Carmel, you know."

"And how did you think he was?" she asked, and I listened with interest for the answer.

"He's consumptive; he's at this side of the Styx, it is true; but his foot is in the water, and Charon's obolus is always between his finger and thumb. He'll die young. He may live five years, it is true. But he's not likely to live two. And if he happens to take cold and begins to cough, he might not last four months."

"My wife has been complaining," said papa; "I wish you could do something for her. You still believe in Doctor Droqville? I think she half believes you have taken a degree in divinity as well as in medicine; if so, a miracle, now and then, would be quite in your way."

"But, I assure you, Doctor Droqville, I never said any such thing; it was you who thought," she said to my father, "that Doctor Droqville was in orders."

Droqville laughed.

"But, Doctor Droqville, I think," said mamma, "you would have made a very good priest."

"There are good priests, madame, of various types; Madame de Genlis, for instance, commends an abbé of her acquaintance; he was a most respectable man, she says, and never ridiculed revealed religion but with moderation."

Papa laughed, but I could see that he

did not like Doctor Droqville. There was something dry, and a little suspicious in his manner, so slight that you could hardly define it, but which contrasted strikingly with the decision and insouciance of Doctor Droqville's talk.

"But, you know, you never do that, even with moderation; and you can argue so closely, when you please."

"There, madame, you do me too much honour; I am the worst logician in the world. I wrote a part of an essay on Christian chivalry, and did pretty well, till I began to reason; the essay ended, and I was swallowed up in this argument—pray listen to it. To sacrifice your life for the lady you adore is a high degree of heroism. But to sacrifice your soul for her is the highest degree of heroism; but the highest degree of heroism is but another name for Christianity; and, therefore, to act thus can't sacrifice your soul; and if it doesn't you don't practise a heroism, and therefore no Christianity; and, therefore, you do sacrifice your soul; but if you do sacrifice your soul, it is the highest heroism—therefore Christianity; and, therefore, you don't sacrifice your soul, and so, da capo, it goes on for ever; and, I can't extricate myself. When I mean to make a boat, I make a net; and this argument that I invented to carry me some little way on my voyage to truth, not only won't hold water, but has caught me by the foot, entangles, and drowns me. I never went on with my essay."

In this cynical trifling there was a contemptuous jocularly quite apparent to me, although mamma took it all in good faith, and said, "It is very puzzling, but it can't be true; and I should think it almost a duty to find out where it is wrong."

Papa laughed, and said:

"My dear, don't you see that Doctor Droqville is mystifying us?"

I was rather glad, for I did not like it. I was vexed for mamma; Doctor Droqville's talk seemed to me an insolence.

"It is quite true, I am no logician; I had better continue as I am; I make a tolerable physician; if I became a preacher, with my defective ratiocination, I should inevitably lose myself and my audience in a labyrinth. You make but a very short stay in town, I suppose?" he broke off suddenly; "it isn't tempting, so many houses sealed—a city of the dead. One does not like, madame, as your Doctor Johnson said to Mrs. Thrale, to come down to vacuity."

"Well, it is only a visit of two or three days; my daughter Ethel is coming out

next spring, and she came up to meet us here. I wish her to have a few weeks with masters, and there are more things to be thought of than you would suppose. Do you think there is anything a country miss would do well to read up that we might have forgotten?"

"Read? read? Oh! yes, two things."

"What are they?"

"If she has a sound knowledge of the heathen mythology, and a smattering of the Bible, she'll do very well."

"But she won't talk about the Bible," laughed papa; "people who like it, read it to themselves."

"Very true," said Doctor Droqville, "you never mention it; but, quite unconsciously, you are perpetually alluding to it; nothing strikes a stranger more, if he understands your language as I do. You had a note from Lady Lorrimer?"

"No," said mamma.

The word "note," I think, struck papa as implying that she was nearer than letter-writing distance, and he glanced quickly at Doctor Droqville.

"And where is Lady Lorrimer now?" asked papa.

"That is what I came to tell you. She is at Mivart's. I told her you were in town, and I fancied you would have had a note from her; but I thought I might as well look in and tell you."

"She's quite well, I hope?" said mamma.

"Now did you ever, Mrs. Ware, in all your life, see her quite well? I never did. She would lose all pleasure in life if she thought she wasn't leaving it. She arrived last night, and summoned me to her at ten this morning. I felt her pulse. It was horribly regular. She had slept well, and breakfasted well, but that was all. In short, I found her suffering under her usual chronic attack of good health, and, as the case was not to be trifled with, I ordered her instantly some medicine which could not possibly produce any effect whatever, and in that critical state I left her, with a promise to look in again in the afternoon to ascertain that the more robust symptoms were not gaining ground, and in the interval I came to see you and tell you all about it."

"I suppose, then, I should find her in her bed?" said mamma.

"No; I rather think she has postponed dying till after dinner—she ordered a very good one—and means to expire in her sitting-room, where you'll find her. And you have not been very well?"

"Remember the story he has just told you of your Aunt Lorrimer, and take care he doesn't tell her the same story of you," said papa, laughing.

"I wish I could," said Doctor Droqville; "few things would please me better. That pain in the nerves of the head is a very real torment."

So he and mamma talked over her headaches in an undertone for some minutes, and while this was going on there came in a note for mamma. The servant was waiting for an answer in the hall.

"Shall I read it?" said papa, holding it up by the corner. "It is Lady Lorrimer's, I'm sure."

"Do, dear," said mamma, and she continued her confidences in Doctor Droqville's ear.

Papa smiled a little satirically as he read it. He threw it across the table, saying:

"You can read it, Ethel; it concerns you rather."

I was very curious. The hand was youthful and pretty, considering Lady Lorrimer's years. It was a whimpering, apathetic, selfish little note. She was miserable, she said, and had quite made up her mind that she could not exist in London smoke. She had sent for the doctor.

She continued: "I shall make an effort to see you, if you can look in at about three, for a few minutes. Have you any of your children with you? If they are very quiet I should like to see them. It would amuse me. It is an age since I saw your little people, and I really forget their ages, and even their names. Say if I am to expect you at three. I have told the servant to wait."

People who live in the country fancy themselves of more importance than they really are. I was mortified, and almost shocked at her cool sentences about "the little people," &c.

"Well, you promise to be very quiet, won't you? You won't pull the cat's tail, or light paper in the fire, or roar for plum-cake?" said papa.

"I don't think she wants to see us. I don't think she cares the least about us; perhaps mamma won't go," I said, resentfully, hoping that she would not pay that homage to the insolent old woman.

Doctor Droqville stood up, having written a prescription.

"Well, I'm off; and I think this will do you a world of good. Can I do any commissions for you about town; I shall be in

every possible direction in the next three hours?"

No; there was nothing; and this man, whom I somehow liked less than ever, although he rather amused me, vanished, and we saw his cab drive by the window.

"Well, here's her note. You'll go to see her, I suppose?" said papa.

"Certainly; I have a great affection for my aunt. She was very kind to me when there was no one else to care about me."

Mamma spoke with more animation than I believed her capable of; I thought I even saw tears in her eyes. It struck me that she did not like papa's tone in speaking about her. The same thing probably struck him.

"You are quite right, darling, as you always are in a matter of feeling; and you'll take Ethel, won't you?"

"Yes, I should like her to come."

"And you know if she should ask you, don't tell her I'm a bit better off than I really am. I have had some awful losses lately; I don't like bothering you about business, and it was no fault or negligence of mine; but I really—it is of very great importance she should not do anything less than she intended for you, or anything whimsical or unjust. I give you my honour there isn't a guinea to spare now; it would be a positive cruelty."

Mamma looked at him; but she was by this time so accustomed to alarms of that kind that they did not make a very deep impression upon her.

"I don't think she's likely to talk about such matters, dear," said mamma; "but if she should make any inquiries, I shall certainly tell her the truth."

I remembered Lady Lorrimer long ago at Malory. It was a figure seen in the haze of infancy, and remembered through the distance of many years. I recollect coming down the stairs, the nursery-maid holding me by the hand, and seeing a carriage and servants in the court before the door. I remember, as part of the same dream, sitting in the lap of a strange lady in the drawing-room, who left a vague impression of having been richly dressed, who talked to me in a sweet, gentle voice, and gave me toys, and whom I always knew to have been Lady Lorrimer. How much of this I actually saw, and how much was picked up with the vivid power of reproducing pictures from description that belongs to children, I cannot say; but I always heard of Aunt Lorrimer afterwards

with interest; and now at length I was about to see her. Her note had disappointed me; still I was curious.

ALL THE WORLD A VILLAGE.

WHAT would the ghost of Captain James Cook, or that of Admiral Anson, or of any other great circumnavigator, say to the following advertisement, which has appeared simultaneously in San Francisco, New York, and London?

Round the World in Eighty-one Days for Eleven Hundred and Forty-five Dollars in Gold (2291. sterling). From San Francisco to Yokohama, 4700 miles; from Yokohama to Hong Kong, 1600 miles; from Hong Kong to Calcutta, 3500 miles; from Calcutta to Bombay, 1400 miles; from Bombay to Suez, 8600 miles; from Suez to Alexandria, 225 miles; from Alexandria to Brindisi, 850 miles; from Brindisi to London, 1200 miles; from London to New York, 3200 miles; from New York to San Francisco, 8294 miles.

This announcement is a veritable sign of the times and of the restless activity of the race. Nobody thinks it much of an achievement in our day to circumnavigate the globe. English and American merchants and manufacturers make the grand tour in the way of their business, and look upon it as a matter of course. And not only the young, but the old make the circle, that would have appalled their grandfathers. Mr. Seward, late Secretary of State for the American Union, made the trip at the ripe age of seventy, and having died at the riper age of seventy-two, has left the world the recital of what he saw, heard, and did, during the journey. A hale old friend of mine, who is upwards of seventy-five years of age, started from London, a few months ago, to New York and San Francisco, intending to proceed from San Francisco to India, China, Australia, and New Zealand, and thought little more of it than if he were going to the Highlands of Scotland for his autumnal holiday. Doubtless he will return all right, for he has pluck enough for anything, and, barring accident or shipwreck, it is very likely that he will accomplish the feat, which he has undertaken from pure love of adventure, or the desire of change and occupation. The late Mr. Anson Burlingame, who was appointed ambassador from the United States to China, and reappointed ambassador by China to his own country and to all the great powers in Europe, declared that he never knew how little the world was until he had sailed round it. "In fact," said he, "I have learned to look

upon the world as no more than a good-sized village."

Distance and remoteness have become traditions of the past, and the imagination of the man who can correspond, by the electric cable, with New York, San Francisco, or Canton, and receive an answer in an hour or two, or perhaps in a few minutes, needs no great prompting to look upon those places as within easy reach of his foot, if it be his pleasure to visit them. The consequences of this neighbourship of once widely-separated lands are defining themselves more distinctly every day, and threaten, perhaps it should be said promise, to assimilate the costume, the manners, and to a partial extent the language of all the nations of the world. Time was when the traveller, who strayed no further afield than to the Continent of Europe, would refresh his eyes by the study of many picturesque varieties of national costume. In Belgium, in Holland, in Germany, in Italy, in Switzerland, in Brittany, in the South of France, in Spain, he found not only a change of scene, language, and manner, but a change in the attire of men and women, which pleased him by its novelty, as well as by its beauty. There was something very piquant and attractive in the Spanish mantilla, as worn by the dark-eyed Andalusians and Madrilenas. This garment is now rarely to be seen, though not many years ago it was as common in the streets of Brussels and Antwerp as in those of Madrid and Seville. The hideous chignon and the miserable apologies for head-gear which the ladies of England, France, and America delight to wear, have rendered the beautiful mantilla impossible. The peasant girls of the Swiss cantons, with their quaint petticoats, and their coquettish hats, have revolutionised their dress, and appear no longer in the coarse, but picturesque and serviceable attire of the olden time, but in the slatternly imitation of the tawdry dress affected by servant-girls who ape the style of their mistresses. All the Christian nations of the world dress pretty nearly alike, and the Orientals are beginning to follow suit.

Not the least curious incident of the approximation of the peoples, which steam and the electric wire have brought about, is the awakening of the sluggish Oriental mind to a knowledge of the fact that there is a Western as well as an Eastern civilisation, and that the former is in many respects worthy of imitation and cultivation. The Chinese and Japanese have begun to swarm

over their own border into other lands, and crossing the Pacific, have made a foot-hold in California and Oregon, to the great advantage of themselves and of those two states of the American Union. They are excellent mechanics, first-rate bakers and gardeners, and as laundresses and getters up of fine linen, they are unrivalled for neatness, punctuality, and cheapness. They also make admirable servants, and in a country like America, where domestic help is not only very costly but very independent and insolent, the economic, thrifty, painstaking, and industrious Chinese supply a pressing want so admirably, as to make the people of New York and New England, and other states on the Atlantic sea-board, very anxious for a similar visitation, to replace the lazy negroes and the saucy Irish, to whom they are almost exclusively beholden for domestic service. Perhaps, as the intercourse among the nations of the East and West becomes more frequent and more intimate, the Chinese and Japanese may find their way to Europe as well as to America, and act among us the sorely needed parts of respectful, economical, and capable servants.

And not only do the eastern potentates of China, Japan, Borneo, and Siam, send to England and Scotland for steam yachts, for railway iron, and for capable engineers to lay down their railroads; not only do they send envoys and ambassadors to report to them on their return the wonders they have seen, and the things to be avoided or imitated, in the example set them by the West; but they themselves begin to perceive the advantages of foreign travel. It was thought a daring innovation on ancient routine when first the Sultan of Turkey, the great Padishah himself, and after him the Khedive, or Viceroy of Egypt, visited England. Their example is about to be followed by a still more secluded and ancient potentate. No Sultan or Shah of Persia has ever been known to travel beyond the limits of that land of roses and romance; but the present Shah, inspired by the spirit of the age, and perhaps prompted by the knowledge of what has been done by his brother of Turkey, has resolved to visit Europe and to see for himself as much as sultans, shahs, kings, emperors, and other great potentates are permitted to see by the vigilant jealousy of those who surround them, or by the absurd etiquette with which they surround themselves. Doubtless he will return to the land of roses a wiser man, with ideas more enlarged and cosmo-

politan than he possessed when he started. Possibly the Mikado or the Tycoon may come next, or the Emperor of China, or that shadowy personage, the Grand Llama of Thibet.

There is but one part of the habitable globe—though a very large part it must be admitted—that is very closely shut against the trade and the ideas of Europe and America. China is not yet thoroughly open, but is opening; Central Asia is no longer the terra incognita that it was; but the interior of Africa, long hermetically sealed, will speedily have the light and air of Europe let into it. A little chink has been pierced in the wall by Doctor Livingstone and other ardent explorers. The chink will widen into a cleft, and the great mysterious door of the long-closed continent will be swung wide open, that all who will may enter. Then will another highway be added to the great village in which we all live, along which the busy wheels of the chariot of trade will rattle, bearing along with them the thought, the manners, and the material wealth of these restless times.

Will this constantly increasing intercourse, this stream of travel, this constant puff of the locomotive, this continual flashing of messages along the electric wire, over the land and under the ocean, produce, in the duly appointed course of time, a uniformity of religion and of language among all the peoples of the earth? If there is to be but one religion, none can doubt that that religion will be the Christian. If there is to be but one language, there can be as little doubt that the English has more chances in its favour than any other. French and German, widely extended though they are, do not force themselves over the globe in the train of emigration; and if they do travel on that mighty tide, are effaced in a generation or two by the more powerful English. Spanish bids fair to keep South America to itself; but North America, to be peopled at no distant day by a hundred or a hundred and fifty millions of souls, will continue to speak English. Australia, New Zealand, and the South African colonies, which, combined if not separately, will rival North America in population, will also speak English. In fact, English has already become the great cosmopolitan language of the world, which every nation begins to study. Language, as well as distance, has hitherto kept people strangers to each other. Strangeness has led to estrangement,

and estrangement, aided by ignorance and prejudice, has been the cause of wars innumerable, which might never have broken out if the peoples of the world had had the opportunities which they now possess of making acquaintance with each other. In view of the fact, however, that Germany is a vast camp, and that every man is compelled, nolens volens, to serve as a soldier during some of the best and most vigorous years of his life; that Russia keeps more than a million of men under arms; that Austria strives to keep as many; that France burns with the desire of revenge against her recent conqueror; and that the whole Continent, in fact, is little better than a vast parade ground for the evolutions of horse, foot, and artillery, it seems over sanguine, if not Utopian, to imagine that the day is perhaps not far distant when nations will cease to make war upon one another for so-called principles of nationality, or for enlarged frontier, or for petty offences against the self-esteem of a king or an ambassador, or for the crazy ambition of the head of a dynasty, who wishes to strengthen himself at home by picking a needless quarrel with some other potentate abroad. Nevertheless, no student of contemporary history, no clear-sighted traveller, no dispassionate observer of the world and its ways, can fail to perceive that the tendency of increased intercourse is towards peace. If there be violence, there is power enough latent somewhere to put a stop to it by the strong arm of the law; and if the whole world be but a village as regards proximity of man to man, or shop to shop, within its boundaries, it is not very unreasonable to hope and believe, that public opinion may ultimately become so strong, so decided, and so unanimous, as to declare a peace-breaker a public nuisance, and put him down accordingly.

EUROPEAN FABLES IN MALAYAN GARB.

AMONGST some recently published papers (Bijdragen) of a learned society at the Hague—the Royal Philological and Ethnological Institute of Netherlands-India—appears a short series of Malayan fables, which we propose to introduce to our readers in the course of the following pages. These fables—fifteen in all—are stated to be current amongst the Malay population of Padang, a Dutch settlement on the

western coast of the island of Sumatra. They are assumed by the annotator, Doctor de Hollander, to be adaptations from European sources; although he admits his inability to discover when or how the transformation was effected. Their claims to notice he holds to be: First. The peculiarities of the dialect in which they are written, which includes several words not to be found in any existing Malay vocabulary. Second. The ingenuity with which the fancies of *Æsop* and *La Fontaine* have been clothed in Malayan garb. In respect of the first of these considerations, we would refer the reader to the paper itself,* which gives the Malay text in full, side by side with a Dutch translation. As regards the second, we may observe that the pretensions of Padang to the character of an European settlement do not go further back than the year 1838, or thereabouts; consequently, the fables in question may fairly be assumed to have obtained currency in that neighbourhood in the course of the last five-and-thirty years. Apart, therefore, from any amusement they may be calculated to afford, they furnish a good illustration of a fact which is frequently overlooked in the present day, to wit, that popular tales of this description have a tendency to propagate themselves, and to acquire a footing in new localities, under the concurrence of suitable conditions; and that, as in the organic world, the processes of dissemination and acclimatisation sometimes go on unheeded before our very eyes.† We give them as nearly as possible in the words of the original text, leaving our readers to form their own opinions respecting them.

The first in the series is entitled *The Two Cocks*. Once upon a time there lived two cocks, who were so outrageously noisy that their master was fain to turn them out to feed in a distant enclosure. Here they began fighting; and one of them was beaten, and lay lifeless in a corner. Whereupon the other cock flew up upon his roost, and crowed loudly in token of his victory. In the twinkling of an eye, down came a hawk, who had heard the noise while passing, and seized and bore off the victorious bird. The moral is an unexceptionable one. We should not think that blessings are designed for ourselves alone;

neither should we boast of our good fortune.

The next fable is our old friend of the *Fox and the Grapes* in a slightly altered form. It is called, *The Jackal and the Grapes*. A jackal was once suffering cruelly from hunger. In the course of his wanderings he found himself in the midst of a vineyard, where the grapes clustered over his head on a trellis-work of split bamboos. Seeing that the grapes looked ripe and tempting, he tried again and again to reach them, but in vain. At length, wearied with his efforts, he sat down exhausted. "Ah!" said he; "why should I trouble myself about them? They are sour; let those have them that like them." Moral: Envious people, when they find that with all their efforts they cannot attain the object they desire, disparage it, and pretend it is not worth the seeking.

Next we have the *Frog and Cow*. A cow grazing in a grassy plain, accidentally trod upon a frog, and killed him. Whereupon all the little frogs scuttled off to their homes. Said an old she-frog to her young ones, "Why have you come back?" And one of the young ones replied, "Oh, mother, we have just seen the biggest creature in the world." "How big was it?" said the mother; "describe it." "Oh, mother, we cannot tell you how big it was." And the mother was angry, and shut her mouth, and puffed herself out. "Was it as big as I am now, children?" "Indeed, mother, it was ever so much bigger," said the little ones. Once more the old frog swelled herself out. "Was it as big as I am now?" "Oh, mother, it was bigger still." And the old frog puffed and blew until she burst herself, and fell dead. Moral: Those who undertake what they are incompetent to perform must expect the fate of the frog in this tale.

The Tiger and the Mosquito. An enormous tiger was one day greatly annoyed by the droning of a mosquito in his ear. "Dirty little beast," said he, "be off to your own stinking pool, and don't trouble me, the lord of this great forest." Whereat the mosquito, very wroth, attacked the tiger forthwith, biting his lips, and eyes, and ears, so that he ran from cover to cover roaring with pain and annoyance. Extremely proud was the mosquito of his victory, deeming himself now the monarch of the forest; but, in his delight, he failed to observe a spider's web, against which he flew, and was caught and eaten by the spider in a trice. Moral: We must not

* *Bijdragen tot de Taal-land en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsche-Indië*, 3rd Volgreeks, 6th Deel, 2nd Stuk. Hague, 1872.

† As an example of a somewhat similar case, see certain of the aphorisms in Captain Burton's *Wit and Wisdom from West Africa*, which have undoubtedly been suggested by missionary teaching.

forget the instability of fortune. Great as we may be, disasters may befall us.

The Tiger and the Mouse. A mouse peeped forth from his hole, and a tiger clapped his paw upon him. Mousie squeaked, and begged for his life; and the tiger let him go. Shortly afterwards the same tiger was caught in a snare, from which he could not get free. The mouse, whose life he had spared, ran to his assistance, and gnawed the snare, so that it broke, and the tiger got away. **Moral:** Even so the humblest may be of service to the highest.

The Frog and the Mouse. A frog, who wanted to cross to the opposite bank of a river, met a mouse of his acquaintance and said, "Come with me to the opposite side." But the mouse said, "No; I would rather go round." "By no means," returned the frog; "we will go together—the shortest way." "All right," said the mouse; "as you please." "Well, then," continued the frog, "let me fasten one of your feet to one of mine, and I will tow you over." "Agreed," said the mouse. So the frog fastened one of his feet to one of the mouse's paws, and swam away with him into the stream. When they had got about half-way across, the mouse was exhausted, and, finding himself sinking, cried out, "Help, my friend, help! I am drowning . . . oh! treachery! I am lost; some one will repay you for your cruel deceit!" So saying he turned over and breathed his last. At that very moment a sparrow-hawk, passing by, saw something like a mouse upon the surface of the water, flew down, and carried it off, and the frog with it. **Moral:** Those who set traps for others sometimes get entrapped themselves.

The Herdboy and the Hunter. A herd-boy was tending some buffaloes on the skirts of a wood. Up came a hunter, saying, "Look you, boy; have you observed a deer anywhere about here? I have been in pursuit of one since dawn, and cannot get a shot at him." And the herdboy said, "I have just seen him enter yonder covert. If you will mind my cattle I will shoot him for you." "Done," rejoined the hunter; "you take my dog and gun, and I will look after the buffaloes." So the herdboy went into the covert, and there stood the deer, feeding. He fired at him, and missed, and the deer got off clear. Presently the dog ran out to rejoin his master, and the boy followed, and found that the hunter had fallen asleep, and the buffaloes

had strayed out of sight. And sorely frightened he was lest his parents should know of it, and he should be beaten by his father for not having minded his own business. **Moral:** Every one has his own affairs to mind. We should not meddle with the concerns of others.

The Grasshopper and the Butterfly. A grasshopper sitting in the grass, saw a butterfly flitting about in a flower-garden, and thought to herself, "Ah, luckless me! Why have not I wings like a butterfly? I can never skim from flower to flower, but must sit here all the day long in the grass." Just at that moment a child came running out into the garden and caught the butterfly, plucked off its wings, and killed it. When the grasshopper saw that, she reflected, "Well, after all, I am better off than the butterfly. No one wants to catch me. It is best to be poor, for then no one notices you." **Moral:** Riches are to their possessors the source of many troubles and anxieties from which the poor are exempt.

The Mouse and the Elephant. Once upon a time an immense elephant was making a progress round a city with a magnificently arrayed princess seated on his back. And all the people turned out to look on in admiration. A mouse standing by said, "Oh, ye people, why look ye so at the elephant, with never so much as a glance at me? Ye gaze at the elephant because he is big and decked out bravely, but ye must know that I am quite as great a personage in my way." Just at that moment up came a cat and swallowed him, saying, "Ha, mousie, had you been as big as an elephant I could not have eaten you up." **Moral:** We should not comport ourselves arrogantly before our superiors.

The Greybeard and the Three Youngsters. An old man of eighty was one day planting some trees in his garden, and some young fellows coming by observed him. "Hallo, daddy," says one, "it is of no use for you to plant those trees, you will be dead and gone long before they bear fruit." "Don't be too sure," returned the old man, "life is uncertain. I may outlive all of you yet. At any rate, if I don't get the benefit of the trees, my grandchildren will." So the young men went their way. Very soon afterwards one went to sea and was lost; another went to the wars, and was shot dead; a third fell out of a palm-tree and was killed. So all three died, and the old man was yet alive. The moral of this fable is scarcely as apposite as most of the others; it is: **We must not neglect**

our duties to posterity whatever may be our age.

The Hawk and the Cock. A very knowing cock, whose cunning had worsted all his enemies, was sitting in his roost. A hawk came to him, saying: "Well, my friend, there is peace and friendship at last between your people and mine, and I, as the eldest representative of my nation, am deputed to bring the glad tidings; henceforth the fowls need no longer dread the hawks; enduring peace is now established, and the hawks and the poultry are like brothers for evermore. Pray come out of your roost, therefore, and help me to communicate the joyful intelligence." The cock listened from behind his grating to the hawk's tale, and replied: "My very good friend, I am rejoiced to hear the news. I know, from experience, that peace and friendship between your people and mine are infinitely to be preferred to strife and variance. But I observe yonder a couple of dogs coming this way, who evidently are the bearers of some intelligence of like import. We had better await their arrival, and so learn all the news at once." When the hawk heard of the dogs he was greatly alarmed. "My dear friend," said he, "not to-day, not to-day; I am very much behind my time already." So saying, he flew away, and right glad was the cock to see him depart. Moral: Specious as an enemy's counsels may appear, we should not follow them, as they will assuredly tend to our undoing.

The Mice and the Cat. In a certain town lived a certain cat, who was very nimble and expert in catching mice. One day, when the cat was away upon her rounds, the chief of the mice summoned a council of his people to consider how they might best defend themselves against the attacks of their enemy. Then out spoke a sage experienced mouse: "The best way would be to fasten a little bell to the cat's neck; we should then always have warning of her approach." And all the other mice said, "Admirable! we shall be delighted to adopt your suggestion." But when it came to the question of attaching the bell to the cat's neck, not a mouse would stir in the matter, each one thinking to himself, "I should get caught for my pains." Moral: Many people are ready to give advice, but few can be found to put the advice into practice.

The Monkey and the Mangosteen. A monkey found his way into a fruit-garden, and there beheld a mangosteen-tree loaded

with fruit. Up he climbs, plucks a mangosteen, and bites off a piece of the rind. Finding how bitter it was, he flung the fruit away, not knowing that it is the nature of the mangosteen to be bitter without and sweet within. Moral: When people meet with unknown objects they must not judge of them by externals.

The Two Travellers amongst the Mountains. Two travellers journeyed together amongst the mountains. And one of them invariably bewailed his fate when he went down-hill, but laughed aloud as he went up. His companion therefore asked him, "How is it that you cry out when the way is fair and smooth, but rejoice when it is hard and toilsome?" "When I go down-hill," said the other, "I remember that I shall have to go up again; when I go up, I know that ere long I shall be at the top, and then it will be all down-hill." Moral: In prosperity, we should not be over-confident—evil may overtake us; neither in ill-fortune should we be too much cast down; we should rather anticipate a change to better.

The Two Dogs. A hound, who was about to have young, besought a watch-dog of her acquaintance to grant her the use of his kennel for a short time. He acceded to the request, and the hound established herself in the kennel, and brought forth her young. After a lapse of some time, the watch-dog applied for the restoration of his kennel, but the hound begged hard to be allowed to remain there a little while longer. Some time afterwards, the watch-dog again renewed his application. "I am just expecting another litter," said the hound, "and you must wait until they too are grown up." At last, the watch-dog got very angry. "Let any one come in who dares," said the hound, "I will only be turned out by force;" for by this time her pups were all big enough and strong enough to side with their mother and take her part. So the watch-dog went sorrowfully away, bemoaning the ingratitude of his friend. Moral: Beware of evil-doers, and mistrust their professions, for no reliance can be placed on their words.

And here the series ends.

THE DEEP SEA FISHING.

Up with the flags, white, purple, and red,
Flutter them out from the tall mast-head,
Let the broad brown sail be bravely spread,
For wives and children must be fed
Though wintry winds wail wearily.
Though the great waves crash on the rocky shore,
Though the ominous foam on the sand lies hoar,
And over the reef where the breakers roar,
The sea-fret's wreathing drearily.

The mother bids her children pray
For him who sails for them far away ;
The widow shrinks from the light of day,
And shudders as cheering words they say,
For darkly the storm clouds gather.
And her one bold boy has gone with the rest,
Where the long lines toss on the billows' crest,
O'er the pitiless sea whose "wandering" breast,
Long years since took his father.

Up with the flag while the sail is set,
Labour and danger must needs be met,
For fire and bread are hard to get.
Better than hunger, or cold, or debt,
The squall o'er the wild waves sweeping.
Up with the flag and away to the goal,
Where for fathoms deep the blue seas roll,
Where the dog-fish dart round the herring shoal,
And the skate and the cod are leaping.

Up with the flag, there is money to make,
Where the sails in the fierce north-easter shake.
Look to gear and tackle, away, for the sake
Of the women at home, who will watch and wake,
In the town 'neath the tall cliffs lying.
God speed the brave hearts on their toil afar,
Till their boats come home 'neath the evening star,
Till they steer their loads o'er the harbour bar,
Where the crimson flag is flying,

THE CUPBOARD PAPERS.

X. THE RULER OF THE ROAST.

THE Ruler of the Roast lives in the Faubourg Pantagruel. Where else should he live, if not in that most bustling of Paris streets, which by some miraculous chance has not been fired, nor pulled down for barricade materials by the shirtless lovers of liberty, the begrimed advocates of equality, and the armed wranglers for fraternity? Here, then, Monsieur Tournebroche is lord paramount in a kingdom of geese, fowls, turkeys, rabbits, hares, and rows of joints of meat, that lie prone to his broad hands, and within reach of his twinkling eye. How artfully he has disposed them to the view of the troops of bargain-loving housewives and cooks who are passing by, intent on a cheap dinner! The square cuts of roast goose, the sections of fowl, veal, and beef, that are arranged upon a marble slab near the door, are flanked by ropes of partridges, and wreaths of larks. The thrush lies at hand, cased in fat, and ready for the spit. I see him too, next door, truffled, for fifteen sous, lying near partridges, showing "the diamond of the kitchen" through their skins, at a trifle under four francs each. The rabbits and hares have not a pleasant look, so we travel to the lines of capons and turkeys, the beaks of which just escape the white cap of proud Monsieur Tournebroche, as he passes outward from his two or three yards of fire to get a little fresh air, and present his handsome person to the gaze of the faubourg.

He glances to the right and left, and sees

that a brisk business is going forward. The vegetable barrows are passing along, mostly governed by women, who are as clean and self-respecting as the traders in the shops, let me observe by the way. The cauliflowers are going off at a tremendous rate to-day; and some small fresh herrings, in the oddest little fishmonger's (the corner of an Auvergnat's wood and coke store), laid out upon fresh ferns, are fought for at one or two sous each. A gaunt lady stands at the grocer's corner before two baskets of snails; and by the grocer's threshold is an open tub of olives, at about sixpence the half kilogramme. That must be a good Auvergnat at his door, with one little section of his black shop given up to an old fishwoman, and just room for a chair and a board at the other corner yielded to a girl who is selling violets. Violets in November—and in plenty. The little bunches are stuck in the bosoms of the work-girls who are out marketing; and at Montmartre, poor Theophile Gautier's fresh grave was covered with them this morning. Grapes, apples, and pears are selling by the pound. You may tell how many the very thrifty ménagère is marketing for, by the number of apples she buys. It is a copper market essentially. Only on the flaming and fragrant premises of Monsieur Tournebroche is a five-franc note seen, when a roast fowl is carried off for a family feast.

The little domestic dinner-market, to which I was introduced by my good friend Madame Barbizon,* was but a hole-and-corner market of a very rough description; but where Monsieur Tournebroche figures, the most Parisian of the Parisians are located. It is the centre of the theatrical population, of the commercial classes, of the dealers in, and makers of, the articles de Paris. As I turned the corner I recognised groups of actors and actresses of the third class; the supreme lady of the Eldorado, the comic singer of the Champs Elysées; thrifty folk, most of them, who will pick up a dainty dinner in penny-worths along the faubourg presently, and be queens and redoubtable chiefs after a quarter of one of Monsieur Tournebroche's poulets, eaten within sight of the spits. Yonder poor, clean-faced actor has just bought a little bunch of black grapes at a barrow; and in his pocket he has a paper of sardines, and another of galantine. He will buy a sou dinner-roll, and then, in his

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. ix., p. 11.

little room up on the fifth floor, he will gaily prepare to be the grand homme at the circus at nine o'clock, for it is he who so closely resembles the hero of Austerlitz. This is the way all this bustling crowd lives from day to day. Clerks of the Marais and of the Faubourg Montmartre; their wives who do a little humble work quietly in their rooms; poor art manufacturers, who can just employ a man and a boy to help them; small tradesmen of all descriptions; designers of fans and patterns, and painters on china—all are to be seen arranging and picking up their menus as they pass along. What variety of living they enjoy! The *marchands des quatre saisons* are truly representative dealers, and bring spring and summer, and autumn and winter to them, in all the fruits and growths of these seasons. It is not only the diners at the gilded restaurants, nor the inhabitants of fashionable Paris, who know what green almonds, wild strawberries, peaches and apricots, melons and green figs, grapes and artichokes, tomatoes and salsifis, cardons and aubergines, mean. All these pass along the Faubourg Pantagruel, and few are the wives, or masters, or journeymen, or artists who buy beyond their means.

Monsieur Tournebroche is not a giver of credit, and this is no eccentricity or sternness of character in his case. Credit is not an idea that is common in the faubourg. One reason why this daily dinner-market exists is that the buyers will not have credit. What they want, and are determined to have, is their full money's worth, and this is not to be had unless you have the money in hand. The villainous money-lender of the poor, who thrives in the low quarters of London and Liverpool, will find no kindred rascal here. The poor are many, as you may see, when they are buying the six-sous square of veal, the leek, and the salad for their dinner; as you may discern when they are at the *barrière guinguettes*, where they may dine for three or five sous; there are the *pauvres honteux*, and the *assistés*, who are on the books of their *bureau de bienveillance*; but none of these are the victims of the usurer. None have had their beds taken from them under a bill of sale; none have been thrown upon the streets by a loan at sixty per cent. If such loan offices existed in the little streets which run east and west from the faubourg, and the laws were as cruel and purblind as those of England in regard to small debts, you would not wait long before you observed the evil effects of

leaving poor folk at the mercy of the usurer. As the case stands here, among these needy purchasers there is no extravagance, because extravagance is impossible. The poor man who is in a place where ready money is the strict rule is a very fortunate, if he be a thoroughly thrifty, man. And if he be not thrifty in the beginning, the ready-money system will teach him to be so in a few rough lessons. Set up a tally-shop in the midst of the dealers of the Faubourg Pantagruel, and lay before these bustling housewives, who have the shrewdest sense of the value of every centime of their money, the system on which the English tally-man proceeds to undermine the workman's house, and the faubourg would not be long in stoning the adventurer's shop-front. In short, apply English debtor and creditor laws, and particularly those of the county courts, to this busiest bit of Paris, and the result would be the destruction of the trade in dinners which now proceeds on the best terms between buyer and seller. At present the faubourg is a mighty cupboard, a busy, ready-money larder some half mile in length. It stretches from the Boulevard Magenta to the Porte St. Denis, and the whole length of it exhibits in a hundred forms the ingenuity of food traders catering for a tasteful, orderly, saving race.

Monsieur Tournebroche's I take to be the most economical establishment in the market, albeit it is the most aristocratic and pretentious as to appointments. Half the premises are a long kitchen, and half a fairly appointed restaurant. Along part of one side of the kitchen, where the mighty fires blaze, are rows of benches and bare tables, at which humble diners can consume the dishes they have bought on the spot for a few sous. The front, towards the window, must be the frontispiece to the book, should any knowing pen ever write the history of Monsieur Tournebroche's establishment.

There lived at Antwerp, in the opening years of the seventeenth century, one Francis Snyders, who could have done justice to the splendour of the picture Monsieur Tournebroche turns daily to his admiring quartier. The leading incident or interest of the picture is a basket of the finest fruit of the season. Here are rosy apples, bunches of grapes, thrown as though the autumn breeze had cast them there; the deep red cherry, hillocks of wild strawberries, half hidden in ferns, with melons for sentinels, then the deep neutral

tint of the black radish, the delicate whites and greens of cauliflower, celery, chicory, or escarolle, warmed with young carrot bunches, or strongly relieved by beet, bulbous and ruby as Bardolph's nose. The deeper greens near the outer circle are supplied by cabbage and spinach, prepared and cleansed as they should be, ready for the cook, the cooler corners lightened by creams of St. Gervais or elsewhere. And then had rich picture ever a more glorious framework than that of the capons of Mans, of pendent hares, of festoons of larks, and sentinels of turkeys drawn up in a severe row in front? He who painted at Antwerp the picture, with lobster for central interest (an honour Homard owes obviously to his colour), in which asparagus, pigeons, snipe, and artichokes are thrown together with a master's witchery, would have done justice to the taste of Monsieur Tournebroche. Either Francis Snyders was before his time, or Monsieur Tournebroche should have been his contemporary in Antwerp.

Peeping through the doorway, I see the benches crammed with diners, the fires blistering and browning scores of birds, while attendants empty soup from cans into plates. Monsieur Tournebroche, in spotless white, is chief figure of the scene, and when he has to bargain with a lady about one of his birds on the spit, his gallantry is of a superb kind. Near the open doors are marble tables, upon which are ranged sections of goose, capon, duck, turkey, and veal, and over each table the prices—forty centimes, fifty centimes, up to eighty centimes—are marked in enamelled letters. At each table there is a long bright fork for the use of customers. Each customer, as he approaches the table bearing the price he is prepared to give, takes up the fork, and, with much deliberation and knowingness, selects his morsel. At the opposite side of the tables is a buxom girl, in snowy bib and sleeves, who is ready to wrap the chosen piece in fine white paper, tie it as a parcel, leaving a loop to the string, by which the purchaser can carry it home. Mrs. Boltt and all the genteel society of Chalkstone will be indeed astonished if their husbands should ever lead their formal steps to the Quartier Pantagruel, to see the outwardly "highly respectable people" who lift Monsieur Tournebroche's choosing-forks. Gentlemen perfectly gloved, ladies who have servants and children with them—I am almost prepared to say very many people

who would "look down" upon the Boltts—are among the patrons of Monsieur Tournebroche.

I had the honour and pleasure of taking Mr. Bloomsbury Baker the length of my quartier, in order to have the advantage of his opinion on its superiority over everything in the way of prompt dinner-buying in London.

"See," said I, directing him to every item as we passed along. "Specialité de déjeuners! That man deals in breakfasts only—Rabelaisian breakfasts for a few pence. Look at this little cheese shop, with the Limbourgs, Bries, cut into, say, twopennyworths; then at this charcutier's; why the variety is extraordinary, from the delightful hure aux pistaches to the humble boudins de Nancy. Opposite, see, they are turning out the cakes from the ovens, almost into the streets—frangipanne, galette, gauffres. And now glance here. They are making pancakes in the doorway. A little charcoal under the flat pan, two or three dabs of butter, large flat spade to turn it, and in a few minutes it is done. The girl who cooks the cakes with the speed of lightning sells them at the same pace. There is a crowd round her. She whips up the pancake, dredges it with sugar, folds it in white paper, delivers it and receives the money in an instant."

"Egad!" Mr. Baker exclaimed, "it would do for a conjuror's trick in England."

"Here, see, is a row of the famous red and white haricots in sacks; the olive, sardine, and herring tubs. And now let us turn into the restaurant department of Monsieur Tournebroche's fiery realms, and rob his spit of a capon."

We had a dinner of goujons de Seine, finely fried with parsley; a capon that had the heat bubbles upon its bosom when placed before us; and an omelette—all perfect. Monsieur Tournebroche proved himself, to our minds that evening, a born genius.

Twirling his glass of burgundy before him, and dusting the table to make room for his impressive elbows, Mr. Bloomsbury Baker said:

"My very dear Fin-Bec, this is very admirable, very admirable indeed, I may say; but permit me to assure you that it would not do in England. It would not suit the Saxon. I have eaten caviar at Moscow, macaroni at Naples, in short *the* thing to be eaten in most parts of the world, and I have come to the conclusion that no good

will ever be done by trying to make the Latin like what the Saxon swallows. This Fanbourg Pantagruel would, in London, be rows of shambles—something like Tottenham-court-road on a Saturday night. Your friend Tournebroche, if an Englishman, would not be the artist he is, but the keeper of a mere cook-shop. And you would have a public-house at the corner of every street in the quartier; and the people would run accounts with the grocer and the baker; and, in fact, that which is a picture, an evidence of taste and economy and sobriety, here, would be a nuisance there."

"You mean, surely, my dear Baker, that these differences exist—not that they must continue to exist; or that the example and teaching of our friend Tournebroche in England would be useless."

"I mean that this quartier belongs to Paris as much as Drury-lane belongs to London. The habits of one race cannot be got into the blood of another. We grow beer and our neighbours burgundy; and I suppose we shall go on doing so to the end of time. Think over your own experience. Our countrymen travel through the vineyards, but they return home only to rejoice the more heartily in the hop-grounds. This burgundy has the sparkle of the Latin eye; beer has the hard clear look of the Teuton blue. It must be so always, my dear Fin-Bec."

"I am sorry to hear a travelled man like you say so," was my observation to my stout Briton. "You remind me of Mr. Bolt." "

"Of Mr. Bolt!" exclaimed Baker. "The most prejudiced, pig-headed fellow I ever had the misfortune of knowing! I remind you of Bolt! My dear friend, why not say of that shadow of his they call Reginald, at once? Yes, say I remind you of that insipid bundle of insular prejudices!"

The waiter brought me the bill at this moment, and we were in a hurry, and I was glad of it; because Baker did at that moment remind me of Bolt, and of the worst side of Bolt into the bargain.

XI. THE QUEEN OF SKIRTS.

It was the brougham of an English princess—from the Hôtel Bristol—that drove away from Madame Rosalie's door, as we turned the corner, I and Petit-Bec, on a message to the Queen of Skirts. We were not to be too angry, but we were to be firm. The dress was to be home without fail by six that evening, for madame was dining en ville, and she had at least a league to

travel, and—there were many more and interspersed with threats of displeasure, appeals as an old and good customer, and references to promises already broken. But we came away in a few minutes beaten at all points; and thoroughly convinced, not only that Madame Rosalie had broken no promises, and that she had no reason to be grateful to an old customer; but that it was very good indeed of her to promise that the dress should be forthcoming in time for dinner. The princess had come away smiling. No person, whether princess, bourgeoisie, or workwoman, went into those rooms of carpet, lace, silk, and mirrors, who did not issue beaming, and in a thoroughly pleasant temper.

The Queen of Skirts might have been the queen of millions of gallant men. Her grace, her ease, her self-command, her gracieuseté (we haven't the equivalent), her sparkling talk, her perfect ignorance that there was a shady side to the street, and her bewitching cleverness in twisting the tastes of all her clients to her own, were worthy of a wider empire than skirts, though I think some of hers would go far towards covering a German principality or two. How she must have laughed at your humble servant when he had got awkwardly out of her presence; for she knew quite well that I had been commissioned to scold her, and that she had beaten me before I had got the beginning of a reproach to my lips! She had a business of extraordinary value; she charged the most extravagant prices; she gave credit boldly directly she knew that she had to deal with people of good family; she disdained her rich vulgar customers because she was an artist, and she knew that upon their shoulders her works would never travel where they would be justly appreciated; she was a lady of prodigious activity, who never appeared to be in a hurry; and, in addition to being one of the leading grandes couturières of her day, was a most domestic wife and mother. The Queen of Skirts was well read, be it understood; of good birth, and accustomed to polite society. No doubt the female beggars on horseback—they are the fiercest and noisiest of the Row—who ordered dresses in the boudoirs of Madame Rosalie, talked of her as a person who gave herself airs, and called herself Rosalie, because her proper name was Petit or Chose. But their disdain could never reach the height of her scorn. She would declare, with majestic earnestness, that she made dresses for many clients

whom she would not honour with her company to dinner.

Now the Queen of Skirts had more reasons for her pride than many of her clients could boast. She was, in her way, the heroine of a romance; brave as the colonel of cuirassiers who was her wedded lord and master. Some genteel readers start. But this is a true bit of life, enacted within the range of my own experience, that I have the honour to submit. When Captain De Larive married he had fair prospects. He was in a regiment of cuirassiers; he had distinguished himself in the Crimea; and his advancement was certain. Moreover, he had good expectations. His father was a man of fair property in Burgundy. Madame De Larive had only a small dowry. Her family had been unfortunate through the escapades of her brothers. But she must, when the captain married her, have been the perfect type of a pretty Frenchwoman. The marriage was a romantic love match, over which many wise heads were shaken among the vineyards that encompassed her home. But the young people lived together in the most provoking felicity. They persisted obstinately in their happiness. The wise heads kept shaking among the paternal vineyards, and muttering words of pity over the poor captain who would not take his arm away from his wife's waist. The wise heads shook away until old De Larive died; and then they requested to be thanked and complimented for the years they had spent in warning the young couple that they would not be happy. Old De Larive had contrived to waste his substance, and to hide his roguery till his death. Captain De Larive, having dutifully accompanied his parent to the field of rest, returned to the house in which he was born, only to learn that it was not his.

It is impossible to say what noisy words would have escaped the son's lips, so vexed was he for Rosalie's sake, had not a little hand been opportunely pressed upon his superb moustache, closing his lips.

"Not a word, Hector," said Rosalie. "Not a word."

"What!" shouted the soldier; and this time two little hands were pressed upon the cuirassier's mouth.

"Silence," cried the wife, "if you love me. We have been, we still can be, happy without it. And, some day, you would grieve over every word said in anger about the father whom you have just laid in his grave. Come away."

They went away, the wise heads wagging after them. What would become of them? What would become of their poor dear children—and there were twins! Yes; Madame De Larive had bestowed twins upon her lord and master.

The pay of captain of cuirassiers in the French army will not keep a family, and permit savings for the future of the children. There was Rosalie's modest dowry, it was true; but Rosalie had three babies, with every hope of a fourth before the next New Year's Day. While the future was under deliberation a Bourse friend presented to Captain De Larive a magnificent affair, that would treble the little dowry in a few months. Rosalie entered into the delightful plan with her husband, and six months afterwards her capital had disappeared into the pockets of the Bourse schemers. There was now not a five-franc piece for the little ones.

Whereupon Madame De Larive announced to her brave cuirassier that she had an idea. Was she not clever with her toilette? There never was a more wonderful contriver. Hadn't she just a little taste? Her taste was the talk of all their friends, and her opinion was law everywhere. Had she not a head for accounts and management? She could manage the bank of France.

Having elicited these verdicts from her husband (who had not many ideas of his own, ideas not being part of the baggage of heavy cavalry), Rosalie laid down that proposition which landed her in boudoirs of silk and lace, as one of the grand couturières of Paris. She reasoned, it seems, in this way. Her children must have a little fortune to begin the world with. A girl must have a *dôt*; it is as much a part of her entry into life as a new dress. No parents in France, unless of the very poorest and most vicious description, leave a girl portionless. "Our concierge," said Madame Rosalie, "lays up a thousand or so for her girl."

And so the brave little lady, seeing her husband's fortune dissipated, and her own lost in an unfortunate adventure, turned dressmaker. She was too proud to paint her husband's name at her doorway; she would not put him at a disadvantage in the world. He kept his military position, wore his stars of the Legion and his Crimean medals as proudly as ever, and left to join his regiment, rejoining her whenever he could get a holiday. Or when she could snatch a few hours from business,

she repaired in all haste to the town where his regiment was quartered. These meetings were the happy holidays for which the Queen of Skirts was perpetually scheming. Many a pretentious gentleman hoped to flirt with the couturière. She received bouquets, she found tender letters addressed to her, she saw rude eyes directed to her, while she worked away for the benefit of the children. She threw flowers into the fire, or gave them to her workfolk, destroyed the letters, and shamed the rude eyes with her honest face.

During a few years of her career the Queen of Skirts was perfectly happy. Her husband had a staff appointment that kept him in Paris, that is, by Vincennes. Here they hired a house, and furnished it, as only Rosalie could furnish a house of six or seven rooms. Nobody ever explained how she did it, but while she conducted the fashionable business of Madame Rosalie, and listened to the whims of half the princesses in Paris; while she designed toilettes, received customers, and directed more than a score of workwomen; she was a model little housewife at Vincennes. When her husband asked brother officers to dinner she prepared the menu, kept a hand of authority on the cook, and always managed to get home in time to dress for dinner, and present herself to the captain's guests. She confessed that she was very tired sometimes, and could hardly eat; but her courage never failed her, and she never allowed anything to fall out of its proper order. Each day was mapped out while she took her morning coffee, even to the minutest details. It was on her domestic arrangements she prided herself more than on the prodigious growth of her business. The business came easily, because the Queen of Skirts could fascinate a duchess. Every customer went away from her boudoirs resolved to recommend her in all directions. Customers who had no orders to give, would go to pass half an hour with Madame Rosalie, and see all the new robes her clever hand had put together. One English princess was sent to her by a German duchess, and the princess sent her sister a few months later.

Observe how complete was Madame Rosalie's views of her duties as wife and mother. She told Madame Fin-Bec that she would not have engaged in the dress-making had the business compelled her to neglect her husband and children; that is, their home comforts. Her success impelled her to watch herself closely, lest

she should pass negligently over even one of her household duties. And this was a fashionable French dressmaker!

The war came. It struck her cruelly at home, and in business. Husband ordered off to the German frontier, to begin with; business suddenly closed. Not a customer came after the first reverse. Not a stitch was set after the 4th of September, when the leading lawyers of Paris proved themselves true inheritors of the ingratitude and baseness of the morrow of Waterloo. Madame Rosalie was left alone in the city, on which the Prussians were advancing. Her children had been sent to Bordeaux, and thither, with a sad heart, the heroine who had been slaving for them, followed. Fortune smiled upon the Queen of Skirts when the fortunes of war bore Hector De Larive's cuirassiers to the banks of the Loire, and so presently gave the warrior husband, as she said, absolutely black as an Auvergnat, to her arms.

The end of the war came, but before the end Hector's valour had won for him the colonelcy of his regiment. Let the reader bear in mind that this is a story true in every particular I am telling him; and I am telling it to him as one of my Cupboard Papers, because the Queen of Skirts appears to me to combine in her little body all the best points of an educated Frenchwoman. For she finds time to read, as well as to design new costumes, and look after the colonel's house and guests. Moreover she is not at a loss, should her husband return home late, to make an excellent supper for him in a few minutes. The Queen of Skirts, to tell the truth, wields a pretty little fourchette of her own, and has given me two or three valuable hints. She will talk on this subject, with mountains of gorgeous dresses lying upon chairs around her, in the prettiest way. When she expects her husband, or has two of her children with her, she is in the highest spirits. We came upon her—it was only a little matter of a walking toilette—one day some four months after the Versailles had got the better of the Communists. She was putting her house in order, slowly, wondering whether all her old customers would come round her again. The welcome we received was genuine, not for the robe's sake—the Queen of Skirts has a soul above that—but from good heart and gratitude, to see that the Terrible Year had not blotted her out of our minds.

Her description of her Année Terrible was the most perfect thing from beginning to

end it is possible to conceive. The charming interpolations, the delicious addenda, the witty asides and by-the-ways, gave a wonderful sparkle to the vivid descriptive passages. She had been, I could see, as brave through all the terrors and scenes of horror as she was when she sat on her husband's knee on the morrow of their ruin, and told him how she would build up his house again, and even provide for the twins!

"He returns to-night," she said, her face beaming, while she touched and re-touched the lace and folds of a dress at hand. "Yes, to-night; and just as you came I was thinking over the colonel's supper. You know he is a little particular in these things."

"And madame also," I ventured to observe.

"You want to tease me," said the Queen of Skirts. "Well, I own, perhaps I am a little gourmande. Now, you shall tell me whether you think I have done well. But first remember that I have to do all myself. I keep nobody up. I have the supper laid in my little boudoir, and we wait upon ourselves, or rather, I do the waiting. I have arranged so that we shall have some Marennes oysters; then I have a partridge, a terrine, and—well, a meringue. With that he will not die of hunger."

"Nor of indigestion," said I.

"It is easily done, and it gives him pleasure," the little woman rattled on. "Many a day and many a night, when he has been able to see me for a few hours in the war-time, I have been able to surprise him with a little dinner or a little supper. Greater gourmets than he pretends to be have praised my mayonnaise, I assure you. In the war-time we found a dinner when others were in despair. We were in a wretched little place, but I would have order in my house, absolutely the same as you see it here in my business."

With all this let me note that the Queen of Skirts kept very good society. She had her place as wife of a colonel of a distinguished regiment, and she well knew how to hold it. Think of it. She could make a pudding and something more; she could keep a household with strict economy; she could manage a most difficult business; and she could find the time to be one of the most agreeable women at any moment—with leisure to prattle about the news of the day. She was of the same race, let the reader observe, as Celestine, my cook. The same orderly, prudent mind, but graced

with education, refined by nature and by culture. Was it likely that Madame De Larive would allow her daughters to grow up portionless in a country where the suitor of her cook expects a dot with her?

THE YELLOW FLAG.

By EDMUND YATES,

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "NOBODY'S FORTUNE," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER XI. RECOMPENSE.

THE next morning, at about twelve o'clock, Martin Gurwood arrived in Pollington-terrace, and found Alice alone in the drawing-room.

"I came especially to see you," he said, after the first greeting, "and yet I scarcely expected to find you had left your room so early. Yesterday was a day of severe trial to you, dear Mrs. Claxton, but you seem to have gone through it bravely."

"If I did," said Alice, with a half-mournful smile, "I think it must have been owing to my pride. I did not know I possessed any of that quality until there came occasion for its display. But I suffered dreadfully from reaction during the night, and was as low and as hysterical as my worst enemy could wish me."

"But that feeling has passed away now?"

"Oh yes; with the morning light came brighter thoughts and better sense; and when your name was announced, I was thinking seasonably enough, as it seemed to me, of the mercy of Providence in giving me such kind friends in the midst of my affliction."

"I am glad to find you in this frame of mind, dear Mrs. Claxton, as I have come to talk to you on a subject which will require your particular attention."

His voice faltered as he spoke, and the colour forsook her cheeks as she listened to him.

"My particular attention," she repeated, with a forced smile. "It must be something serious, then."

"It is serious, but not, I hope, distasteful," said Martin. "I have been with Mr. Statham this morning. I went to him to give him the opportunity of speaking to me upon a matter which I knew he had most deeply at heart, and which must, sooner or later, have been broached by him."

He looked at her keenly, watching the effect of his words. Her face expressed

great interest, but no alarm, no regret. He was glad of that, he thought to himself.

"I was with Humphrey for an hour, and when I left him, I told him I should come straight to you. Mine is a strange errand, Alice"—it was perhaps the first time he had addressed her by her Christian name, and the word as spoken by him rang musically but mournfully on her ear—"a strange errand for a confirmed old bachelor!"

Alice started at the word.

"Yes," continued Martin, very pale, but striving hard to smile, and to command the inflexions of his voice, "it is the old story of people preaching what they never intend to practise. Dear Alice, Humphrey Statham loves you, and I am here to ask you to marry him?"

Bravely done, Martin, at last! Bravely done, though you were asking for what you knew was equivalent to your death-warrant; bravely spoken, without a break in your voice, though her dear eyes were fixed upon you, and you had taken into yours that little hand which you were urging her to bestow upon another.

Alice was motionless for a moment. Then she drew back, shuddering and crying, "I cannot, I cannot."

"Stay, Alice," said Martin, in his soft, soothing tone. "Humphrey Statham is a good man, and you owe him much. You know that I would not unnecessarily wound your feelings, dear Alice; but I must tell you that when we first discovered who you were, it was entirely owing to Humphrey Statham's chivalry, patience, and good sense that matters were arranged as they were, and that you were up to yesterday kept in ignorance of the fraud which had been practised on you. I, misinformed and bigoted as I was, had intended to take other steps, but I yielded to Humphrey's calm counsel. Ever since that hour, he has watched over your best interests with the keenest sympathy. Any comfort you have experienced is due to his fostering care and forethought, and so late as yesterday you yourself heard him plead your cause with eloquence, which was inspired by his affection for you."

He paused for a moment, and Alice spoke.

"It is not that," she said; "it is not that. I know all I owe to Mr. Statham; I have long since acknowledged to myself how kind and good he has been to me. But," she added, with downcast eyes and flushing cheeks, "how can I let a man like

that take me for his wife? He thinks he loves me now, and doubtless he does. He is not the man to be led away by his feelings, but the love of any man for me would be exposed to a worse trial than that of time or use. Could Mr. Statham bear to know that the world was talking of his wife, to guess what it said? Is not the world filled with persons like Mr. Wetter, and should I not by marrying any honest man expose him to the sneers and gibes of such a crew? I could not do it! I would not do it!"

"There would be no question of that," said Martin Gurwood. "Recollect that your story in its minutest details is known to Mr. Statham, and that he is the last man in the world likely to act upon impulse, or without a calm analysis of the motives that prompt him. There is no one who can testify to this so strongly as myself, and I can declare to you solemnly that it was made clear to both of us long since how blameless you were, and how grievously you had been sinned against. Do not abide by that hastily-spoken decision, Alice, I beseech you. Think of what a noble fellow Humphrey is; recollect how true and steadfast, and triumphant has been his advocacy of your cause; recollect that he is no longer young, and that on your reply to the question I have put to you hangs the hope of his future life."

Bravely spoken, Martin! The work of expiation progresses nobly now!

Alice was silent for a moment. Then she said, "If I could think this——"

"Think it, believe it, rely on it! Standing to you in the relation which was half self-assumed, half imposed upon me by the force of circumstances; loving you, as I do, with a brotherly regard" (his voice faltered for an instant here; but he quickly regained its command), "I could not be blinded in a matter in which your future happiness is involved, even by my affection for Humphrey Statham. Hearing this, you need have no further fear. See, Alice, I may go back to Humphrey and make him happy, may I not? I may tell him, at least, that there is hope?"

Again a pause. Then the low but clear reply:

"You may."

"God bless you, dear, for those words!" said Martin, bending down and touching her forehead with his lips. "They will give new life to the noblest fellow in the world!" Then, as he drew back, he muttered, "It is all over now."

"And you," said Alice, laying her hand gently on his arm, "you spoke of yourself just now as a confirmed bachelor; but I have had other hopes for you."

"What do you mean?" he cried.

"Women's eyes are quick in such matters," she said. "Have you been too absorbed to perceive that there is one by whom your every movement is watched, your every thought anticipated? one for whose first proofs of kindness to me I was indebted to the interest she takes in you? one who——"

"I think you must be mistaken, my dear Alice," said Martin, coldly. "It has been ordained that my life is to be celibate and solitary; and what pleasure I am to have is to be derived from the contemplation of your happiness. So be it; I accept my fate. Now I must hasten back to Humphrey with the good news."

He kissed her forehead again, and left the room. As he passed down the stairs, he saw through the open door Pauline seated at the table in the dining-room writing. She looked up at his approach; and though he had intended going straight out he could not resist her implied invitation to speak to her.

"After all, it will be better so," he said to himself.

"I thought you would be here this morning, Monsieur Martin," said Pauline, timidly. "You have seen Alice, and you find her better than we could have hoped for, do you not?"

"Yes," said Martin, "I certainly found her better; but it was my good fortune to be the bearer of some news to her which I think has left her better still."

The idea which had haunted her previously—was it true? had he come to make the announcement?

"You the bearer of news?" she asked in tremulous tones.

"Yes," he replied, cheerily; "good news for Alice, and news in which you, dear Mrs. Durham, will consequently rejoice. There is every reason that you, who have been so faithful to the trust reposed in you, so staunch a friend to us all, should be the first to hear it. Alice is going to be married to Humphrey Statham."

The tension of suspense had been so great that Pauline had scarcely strength to express her delight.

"Yes," said Martin, speaking slowly and with emphasis, but purposely averting his eyes from his companion. "It is a great blessing to me to know that two persons

whom I love so dearly will be happy. I dare say it seems strange to other persons, and indeed it does sometimes to myself, to think that I, who am a confirmed bachelor, and who from very early youth determined to lead a single life, can take interest in settling the domestic matters of my friends. But in this instance, at least, I take the greatest interest; and I am sure that you will have the good sense to understand and appreciate my motive."

"You pay me a great compliment by saying so, Monsieur Martin," said Pauline in a low constrained voice. Then, after a little pause, she asked, "Have you five minutes to spare, Monsieur Martin, while I talk to you about myself?"

"Certainly," said Martin; "I was on my way to Humphrey with the news."

"It is good news, and he can wait for it five minutes. If it were bad, it would go to him quickly enough," said Pauline. "I will not detain you longer than the time I have mentioned. I told you I wanted to talk to you about myself; and the subject is therefore not one in which I take much pleasure, or, indeed, much interest."

"You should not speak so bitterly," said Martin, kindly. "There are two or three of us whose best regard you have won and retain."

"I did not mean to be bitter, Monsieur Martin," said Pauline, humbly. "I will put what I have to say in very few words. It will be obvious to you that the time has now arrived when the manner of my life must be again altered. Alice will find, or rather has found, a guardian better able to watch over and protect her; and my part, so far as she is concerned, is played out. You know all my story, Monsieur Martin, and you know human nature sufficiently well to recognise me as a woman of activity, and to be sure that it would be impossible for me to endure the nullity of this English life, in which I have no place; and now that Alice is safe, and going to be happy and respectable for ever, no occupation. I must be kept from thought, too, Monsieur Martin; from thinking of the past—you comprehend that."

"Not of the immediate past," he said gently. "Recollect what use you have been to us: how could we have done without you? It will be pleasant to you to recollect the services you have rendered to this poor girl: how by your aid, at that fearful time of trial in the house at Hendon, we were enabled to overcome the difficulties which arose, and which would

have been too much for us, but for your quickness and mother-wit. You will recollect how successfully you have watched over her here, and how her health has suffered but little comparatively from the dreaded shock under your skilful nursing and kind companionship. It will be pleasant to recal all these things, will it not, Pauline?"

"Yes," said Pauline, pondering; "but there is another portion of my past upon which I shall not cease to dwell. To prevent the thought of that coming over me, and striking sorrow and dismay into my soul, I must give up this dreamy, easy-going existence, and take to a life of action. I am not a strong-minded woman, Monsieur Martin; and God knows I do not pretend to have a mission, or any nonsense of that kind. There are not many positions for which I am fitted; some would be beyond my moral, others beyond my physical strength. But I must have a career of some sort; and away in France, among my compatriots, there are various means of honest industry for women such as are not to be found here."

"You intend to leave England, then?" asked Martin.

"Yes," said Pauline. "Why should I remain? As I said before, my part here is played out. Do you think it will be long before Alice is married?"

"I cannot say," said Martin. "No date has been mentioned; but if I am consulted, I shall advise that the marriage take place as soon as possible. There is no reason for delay; and for my own part, I am anxious to get home again."

"You will go back to your country parish?" asked Pauline.

"For a time, certainly," said Martin; "but my plans are indefinite."

"On the day of my sister-in-law's marriage, then, when I have placed her in her husband's hands, and thus satisfied myself that she has no further need of me, I shall bid her adieu, and shall go to France. And I have a request to make to you, Mr. Gurwood, in your position as Mr. Calverley's executor. You are aware that just before I came to reside in his house, I placed in his hands two thousand pounds, which he was good enough to invest for me. I shall now be glad if you will sell those securities, and let me have the money, for which I shall have a use about that time. Will you do so?"

"Certainly I will. But is there no chance of your altering your decision?"

"None. You think it is a right one, do you not?"

"It is a conscientious one, no doubt; but we shall all miss you very deeply."

Her earnest eyes were fixed upon him as he spoke. His words were fair, as he meant his tone to be hearty and regretful; but he was not clever enough to hide from her his unmistakable pleasure at her decision. She knew that he approved of her departure for Alice's sake, and, bitterest thought of all to her, felt it a relief for his own.

There was an awkward silence for some minutes. To break it, Martin remarked:

"You will be glad to hear that there is no danger of any further annoyance from Mr. Wetter. It appears that Humphrey saw him yesterday; and after what passed between them, he is perfectly satisfied that Mr. Wetter will not attempt any further interference."

"I am pleased to hear it," said Pauline, "but not surprised. Henrich Wetter was always a coward; barking loudly when suffered to run at large, but crouching and submissive directly the whip is shaken over him. No, Alice need fear him no more."

"One word more," said Martin, rising from his seat; "one last word, Madame Du Tertre—I shall always think of you by that name, which is very familiar and very pleasant to me—one last word before I take my leave. Can nothing more be done for you to help you in the life which you have chosen?"

Pauline looked at him steadily.

"Nothing," she replied.

"Recollect that, though I am but a poor country parson, Humphrey Statham is what may be called a rich man; and I am sure I am justified in speaking for him, and saying that any amount of money which you might require would be at your service."

Pauline shook her head.

"Money in my country, more especially in the southern provinces, where my lot will most probably be cast, goes much further than it does here; and what I have of my own will enable me not merely to live, but, as I trust, to do a certain amount of good to others. I am very grateful all the same, Monsieur Martin, for your generous offer."

"My generous offer," said Martin, "was simply proposing to acknowledge, in a very slight manner, the existence of a debt due to you by Alice's friends, which can never

be repaid. We will see later on if we cannot induce you to alter your decision."

"Yes," said Pauline, quietly, "we will see later on."

Then Martin Gurwood took his leave of her, and walked back to his hotel. It was nearly over now; he had almost completed his self-appointed task. So well had he performed his mission that Alice evidently had no idea of the sacrifice he was making in yielding her to his friend, no idea even that he had ever cared for her otherwise than as her guardian. That was proved by the manner in which she had hinted at her hope that he might find solace elsewhere. That was a strange notion too! Could it merely have arisen in Alice's imagination, or was there any real foundation for it? Had he been so absorbed in his infatuation about Alice as to have been blind to all else that was passing round him? He did not know; he could not say. If it was so, he had acted rightly and honestly in the course he had taken with Pauline. His infatuation for Alice! That was all over now; in his intemperate youth he had greatly erred, in his forlorn middle age was he not justly punished?

And while Martin was jostling through the crowd, Pauline sat with her eyes fixed upon the fire, her mind filled with cognate thoughts. To her also the end had come. What had given the relish in her early days had long since grown distasteful to her; and the hope that had proved the light of her later life had, after doubtful flickering, at length been rudely extinguished; and in the hearts both of Martin and Pauline there was the same dismal conscientiousness that they were justly punished for the misdeeds of their youth, and that their expiation was necessary and just.

Two months after the date of these occurrences, on a bright and balmy spring morning, at a little City church hiding away somewhere between enormous blocks of warehouses, Humphrey Statham and Alice were married.

Brave to the last, Martin Gurwood himself performed the service, reading it through with a strong manly voice, and imploring the blessing of Heaven on those concerned, with unaffected fervour.

When the ceremony was ended, and the bride and bridegroom had departed, Martin joined the one other person who had been present—Pauline.

"Your plans for leaving are matured?" he said.

"So far matured," she said, with a sad smile, "that the cab with my luggage is at the end of the street, and that when I leave this, I go on board the steamer."

"Indeed," said Martin. "Then you have taken farewell of Alice?"

"Yes; early this morning."

"And you have told her of your plans?"

"No, indeed, for they are as yet undecided; but I have told her that I will write and let her know them."

"Be sure that you do," said Martin, "for we are all of us deeply interested in you. I have brought you," he added, handing her a packet, "your own two thousand pounds. With them you will find two thousand pounds more—one thousand from Alice as your sister-in-law, one thousand from Humphrey as your dead husband's old friend. They bade me give you this with their united love, and hoped you would not shrink from accepting it."

Pauline's voice shook very much as she replied, "I will accept it certainly; I shall hope to find a good use for it."

"Of that I have no doubt," said Martin. They had reached the end of the street by this time, and found the luggage-laden cab in waiting. "Good-bye, Madame Du Tertre," said Martin, after he had banded her into the vehicle, "good-bye, and God bless you."

"Good-bye, Monsieur Martin," said Pauline, returning his hand-pressure, and looking for an instant straight into his eyes, "good-bye." Then when the cab had driven off, she threw up her hands and crying out passionately, "Adieu à jamais!" pulled her veil over her face and burst into a flood of tears.

CHAPTER XII. L'ENVOI.

AWAY in the pleasant village of Twickenham, at the end of a broad lane turning out of the high-road, stands, shut in by heavy iron gates and in the midst of a large and exquisitely-kept garden, a bluff, red-faced, square-built, old-fashioned house. From its windows you look across a broad level mead to the shining Thames, winding like a silver thread amongst the rich pasture-grounds, while from the tall elms, planted with forethought more than a century ago to serve as a screen against the north-east wind, comes the cawing of a colony of rooks, who there have established their head-quarters. Over all, house and garden, river and rookery, mead and landscape, there is an air of peace and prosperity, wealth and comfort, calm and

repose. Far away on the horizon a lowering grey cloud shows where the great metropolis seethes and smokes; but so far as freshness and pure air are concerned, you might be in the very heart of the country.

Creeping down the great staircase, and sliding along the broad open balustrade, comes a slim elegant little girl of about eight years old, who slips out through the open dining-room window, and running across the garden to the iron gates, peers long and earnestly down the lane. The little girl is disappointed apparently, for when she turns away, she walks soberly back to the house, and stationing herself at the bottom of the staircase, calls out, "There is no sign of him yet, papa!"

"Well," cries a cheery voice from the upper floor, "there's plenty of time for him to come yet, little Bell! you are such an impatient little woman." And with these words, Humphrey Statham walks out on to the landing in his dressing-gown, and with a book in his hand.

Three years have passed away since the occurrences narrated in the last chapter. They have left but little mark on our old friend; he is a little more bald, perhaps, and there are, here and there, patches of grey in the roots of his crisp beard, but his eyes are as bright and his manner as cheery as ever.

"You are such an impatient little woman," he repeated, pulling the child towards him and kissing her forehead.

"No, I am not," said Bell; "not impatient generally, pappy, only I want to see the gentleman, and you never will talk to me when you've got a book in your hand."

"Between you and your mamma, what is one to do?" said Humphrey Statham, laughing. "Mamma wants me to read to her, you want me to play with you, and it is impossible to please both at the same time."

"We both want you, because we're both so fond of you, pappy darling," said Bell, putting up her face again to be kissed, "and you ought to be pleased at that. There, I declare then I did hear wheels." And the child breaks away from Humphrey's grasp, and again rushes to the gate.

She is right this time. A fly is driving away, and the gentleman who has alighted from it stands waiting for admittance. A man with a thin face, clean-cut features, and light hair, dressed entirely in black and with a deep mourning band round his

hat. He started violently at the sight of the child, but recovered himself with an effort.

"You are little Bell?" he said, putting out his hand.

"Yes," she replied, sliding her little fingers into his, and looking up fearlessly into his face. "I am little Bell, and you are Mr. Gurwood. I know you! Papa and mamma have been expecting you, oh, ever so long."

The child pulled him gently towards the house, and he had scarcely crossed the threshold when he was seized in Humphrey Statham's hearty grasp.

"Martin, my dear old friend—at last. We thought you would never come, we have waited for you so long."

"So Bell tells me," said Martin, returning his friend's pressure; "but you see here I am. You're not looking a bit changed, Humphrey! And your wife?"

"Alice! Here she is to answer for herself."

Yes, she was there, more lovely than ever, Martin thought, in the mellowed rounded beauty of her form, and with the innocent trusting expression in her eyes still unchanged.

Let us, unseen by them, stand by the two old friends as they sit that evening over their wine, in the broad bay-window looking towards the sunset, and from their conversation glean our final records.

"And you are very happy, Humphrey?" asked Martin.

"Happy!" cried Humphrey Statham; "my dear Martin, I never knew what happiness was before. I rather think," he continued, with a smile, "that laziness may have something to do with it. You see, Alice doesn't care much about my being absent for the whole of the day, as I should necessarily be if I attended strictly to business; and as, living as we do, I do not spend anything like my income, I have knocked off City work to a certain extent, and leave the business in Mr. Collins's charge. He sees how matters are tending, and has made overtures to buy it, and shortly I shall let him have it to himself, I suppose. Not that my life is wholly objectless; there's the garden to look after, and Bell's education to superintend, and Alice to be read to; and then at night I potter away at a book on Maritime Law, which I am compiling, so that I find the twenty-four hours almost too short for what I have to do."

"And Alice?"

"I think that I may say she is perfectly happy. I have not a thought which she does not share, not a wish which is not inspired by her."

"And little Bell? what a charming child she has grown to be. To go back, Humphrey, for the first and only time to that conversation which we had in your chambers, I may say that circumstanced as I am in regard to that child, I was delighted to notice the fancy she seemed to take to me to-day."

"Curiously enough she has had from the first mention of your name an odd interest about you, and has frequently asked when you were coming to see us."

"Does—does Alice know anything about that story?"

"Only so far as I am concerned. I told her of my early attachment to Emily Mitchell, and the story of how I lost her; but she has not the least idea of Emily's further career beyond the fact that Bell is Emily's child."

"True to the last, true as steel," said Martin Gurwood, grasping his friend's hand.

"And now tell me of yourself, Martin," said Humphrey Statham; "what you are doing, what are your plans?"

"It is soon told," said Martin Gurwood: "I wrote you of my poor mother's death, and told you that she died without making any will. I am consequently her sole heir, and am a very rich man. The money is no good to me, Humphrey, but it will be a fine portion for little Bell, whom I have made my heiress under your guardianship."

"Time enough to think of that, Martin. What do you intend to do now?"

"To work, old friend, according to my lights, in striving to better the condition of my fellow men. Yesterday I resigned the vicarage of Lullington, and——"

"You don't mean to say you are going to become a missionary?"

"Not as you seem to suspect," said Martin, with a smile, "among savages and cannibals, but among those who perhaps need it not less, the lower classes of London. In striving to do them good, I purpose to spend my life and my income, and it will need but a very moderate amount of success to convince me that I have done rightly."

"It is not for me to quarrel with the decision, Martin," said Humphrey Statham; "it is boldly conceived, and I know will

be thoroughly carried out. And it will be moreover a satisfaction to me and to Alice to know that the scene of your labours is so close to us. When you want temporary rest and change, you will find your home here. You know that there is no one in the wide world whom it would give my wife and myself so much pleasure to welcome."

"I know it," said Martin, "and have my greatest pleasure in knowing it. Now tell me, Humphrey, has anything ever been heard of Madame Du Tertre, or of Pauline?"

"Nothing," replied Humphrey Statham, shaking his head; "as you know, she promised to write to us to tell us of her plans, but she has never done so, and that, I think, is the one grief of Alice's life. Pauline was so true a friend to my wife at a time when she most needed such a friend, that she was most desirous to hear of her again. But it seems as though that were not to be; her name is one of those which are 'writ in water.'"

One more look around ere the curtain falls. See Alice adored by her husband, happy and contented, with all the troubles of the past obliterated. See Humphrey Statham devoted to his wife, and finding in her love a recompense for the havoc and the tempest which destroyed his early hope. See Martin Gurwood labouring manfully, steadfastly, among the London poor, inculcating, both by precept and example, the doctrine, to the setting forth of which he has devoted his life. See him making occasional holiday with his old friends, and watching over the growth and education of little Bell; thinking of the providence which has endowed this girl so nobly by the hands of the two men who made the story of her mother's life; how sheltered she is, how safe from the terrible temptations which come to women with poverty and friendlessness; how the Yellow Flag will never flaunt over her beautiful head, a taunt and a warning.

END OF THE YELLOW FLAG.

Next week will be commenced a short Serial Story, entitled

NOTES OR GOLD?

By the Author of "Never Forgotten," "Fatal Zero," &c.

On the 16th of December will be published the
**EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER FOR
CHRISTMAS, 1872,**

ENTITLED

DOOM'S DAY CAMP.

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THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 211. NEW SERIES. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1872. PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BORN AND THE BAY."

CHAPTER XXVI. LADY LORRIMER.

My curiosity was soon gratified. After luncheon we drove to Mivart's, and there in her sitting-room I saw Lady Lorrimer. I was agreeably surprised. Her figure was still beautiful. She was, I believe, past sixty then; but, like all our family whom I have ever seen, she looked a great deal younger than her years; I thought her very handsome, very like my idea of Mary Queen of Scots in her later years; and her good looks palpably owed nothing to "making up." Her smile was very winning, and her eyes still soft and brilliant. Through so many years, her voice as she greeted us returned with a strange and very sweet recognition upon my ear.

She put her arms about mamma's neck, and kissed her tenderly. In like manner she kissed me. She made me sit beside her on a sofa, and held my hand in hers. Mamma sat opposite in a chair.

Lady Lorrimer might be very selfish. Lonely people often are. But she certainly was very affectionate. There were tears in her fine eyes as she looked at me. It was not such a stare as a dealer might bestow on a picture, to which, as a child, I had sometimes been subjected by old friends in search of a likeness.

By-and-bye she talked of me.

"The flight of my years is so silent," she said, with a sad smile to mamma, "that I forgot as I wrote to you, how few are left me, and that Ethel is no longer a child. I think her quite lovely; she is like what I remember you, but it is only a likeness; not the same; she does not sacrifice her originality. I'm not afraid, dear, to say all

that before you," she said, turning on me for a moment her engaging smile. "I think, Ethel, in this world, where people without a particle of merit are always pushing themselves to the front, young people who have beauty should know it. But, my dear," she said, looking on me again, "good looks don't last very long; your mamma, there, keeps hers wonderfully; but look at me. I was once a pretty girl, as you are now; and see what I am!"

*"Le même cour des planètes
Règle nos jours et nos nuits;
On me vit ce que vous êtes
Vous serez ce que je suis."*

So, I qualify my agreeable truths with a little uncomfortable morality. She'll be coming out immediately?"

Mamma told her, hereupon, all her plans about me.

"And so sure as you take her out, her papa will be giving her away; and, remember, I'm to give her her diamonds whenever she marries. You are to write to me, whenever anything is settled, or likely to come about. They always know at my house here, when I am on my travels, where a letter will find me. No, you're not to thank me," she interrupted us. "I saw Lady Rimington's, and I intend that your daughter's shall be a great deal better than hers."

Our old Malory housekeeper, Rebecca Torkill, had a saying, "Nothing so grateful as pride." I think I really liked my Aunt Lorrimer better for her praises of my good looks than for her munificent intentions about my bridal brilliants. But for either, I could only show my pleasure by my looks. I started up to thank her for her promised diamonds. But, as I told you, she would not hear a word, and drew me down gently with a smile again beside her.

Then she talked, and mamma talked.

For such a recluse, Lady Lorrimer was a wonderful gossip, and devoured all mamma's news, and told her old stories of all the old people who still figured in such oral history. I must do her justice. There seemed to me to be no malice whatever in her stories. The comic was what she enjoyed most. Her lively pictures amused even me, who knew nothing of the originals; and the longer I sat with her, the more confidence did I feel in her good nature.

A good deal of this conversation was all but whispered, and she had despatched me with her maid to look at some china she had brought home for her cabinets in London, at the other end of the room.

When I returned their heads were still very near, and they were talking low with the same animation.

I sat down again beside Lady Lorrimer. I had spun out my inspection of the china as long as I could.

Lady Lorrimer patted my head gently, as I sat down again, without, I fancy, remembering at the moment that I had been away. She was answering, I think, a remark of mamma's, and upon a subject which had lain rather heavily at my heart since Monsieur Droqville's visit to our breakfast-table that morning.

"I don't know," she said; "Monsieur Droqville is a clever physician; but it seems to me he has always made too much of Mr. Carmel's illness, or delicacy, or whatever it is; I do not think Mr. Carmel is in any real danger—I don't think there is anything seriously wrong with him—more, in fact, than with any other thin young man who now and then has a cough. Three years ago, when I first made his acquaintance—and what a charming creature he is!—Monsieur Droqville told me he could not live more than two years; and this morning, when I asked how Mr. Carmel is, he allowed him three years still to live; so if he goes on killing him at that easy rate, he may live as long as Old Parr. And now that I think of it, did you hear a rumour about Sir Harry?"

"There are so many Sir Harrys," said mamma. "Do you mean Sir Harry Rokestone?"

"Of course I mean Sir Harry Rokestone," she answered; "have you heard anything of him?"

"Nothing, but the old story," said mamma.

"And what is that?" asked Lady Lorrimer.

"Only that he hates us with all his heart

and soul, and never loses an opportunity of doing us all the mischief he can. He has twice prevented my husband getting into the House—and cost him a great deal more money than he could afford; and he has had opportunities, from those old money dealings that you know of between the two families, of embarrassing my poor husband most cruelly. If you knew what enormous law expenses we have been put to, and all the injuries he has done us, you would say that you never heard of anything so implacable, so malignant, and——"

"So natural," said Lady Lorrimer. "I don't mean to fight Sir Harry Rokestone's battle for him. I dare say he has been stern and vindictive; he was a proud, fierce man; and, my dear Mabel, you treated him very ill; so did Francis Ware. If he treats you as you have treated him, nothing can be much worse. I always liked him better than your husband; he was better, and is better. I use the privilege of an old kinswoman; and I say nothing could have been more foolish than your treatment of him, except your choice of a husband. I think Francis Ware is one of those men who never ought to have married. He is a clever man; but in some respects, and these of very great importance, he has always acted like a fool. Harry Rokestone was worth twenty of him, and would have made a much better husband than ever he did. I always thought he was the handsomer man; he had twice the real ability of Francis Ware; he had all the masculine attributes of mind. I say nothing about his immensely superior wealth; that you chose to regard as a point quite unworthy of consideration. The only thing not in his favour was that he was some years older."

"Twenty years nearly," said mamma.

"Well, my dear, a man with his peculiar kind of good looks, and his commanding character, wears better than a younger man. You recollect the answer of the old French mareschal to the young petit maître who asked him his age. 'Je ne vous le dirai pas précisément; mais soyez sur qu'un âne est plus âgé à vingt ans qu'un homme ne l'est à soixante.' I don't say that the term would have fairly described Francis Ware. I know very well he was brilliant; but those talents, if there are no more solid gifts to support them, grow less and less suitable as men get into years, until they become frivolous. However, I am sure that Harry Rokestone does hate you both; and he's just the man

to make his hatred felt. The time has passed for forgiveness. When the fire of romance has expired, the metal that might have taken another shape cools down and hardens in the mould. He will never forgive or change, I am afraid; and you must both lay your account with his persevering animosity. But, you say, you haven't heard any story about him lately?"

"No; nothing."

"Well, old Mrs. Jennings, of Golden Friars, sometimes writes to me, and she says he is going to marry that rich spinster, Miss Goulding of Wrybiggins. She only says she hears so; and I thought you might know."

"I should not wonder; it is not at all an unlikely thing; I don't see that they could do better; there's nothing to prevent it, so far as I can see."

But although mamma thus applauded the arrangement, I could see that in her inmost heart she did not like it. There is something of desertion in these late marriages of long-cast-off lovers, who have worshipped our shadows in secret, through lonely years; and I could see dimly a sad little mortification in mamma's pretty face.

As we drove home I mused over Lady Lorrimer. The only disagreeable recollection that disturbed my pleasant retrospect was that part of her conversation that referred to papa. She said she "used the privilege of an old kinswoman." I should have said abused it rather. But mamma did not seem to resent it; I suppose they were on terms to discuss him; and they either forgot me, or thought I had no business to be in the way.

In every other respect, I was very much pleased with my visit, as I well might be. She was much more clever than I expected, more animated, more fascinating. I was haunted with the thought how lovely she must have been when she was young.

"Don't a great many older women than Lady Lorrimer go out a great deal?" I asked.

"Yes," answered mamma, "but they have young people to take out very often."

"But papa mentioned some this morning, who are everywhere, and never chaperon any one."

"I suppose they enjoy it, as they can't live without it; pull up that window, dear."

"I wonder very much she doesn't go out; she's so handsome, really beautiful, considering her years, I think; and so very agreeable."

"I suppose she doesn't care," she answered a little dryly.

"But she complained of being lonely," I resumed, "and I thought she sighed when she spoke of my coming out as if she would like a look at the gay world again."

"My dear you bore me; I suppose Lady Lorrimer will do with respect to that, as she does about everything else, precisely what pleases her best."

These words mamma spoke in a way that very plainly expressed: "Now you have heard, once for all, everything I mean to say on this subject; and you will be good enough to talk and think of something quite different."

CHAPTER XXVII. WHAT CAN SHE MEAN?

WE had promised to go to see Lady Lorrimer again next day, at the same hour. My head was still full of her; mamma did not come down to breakfast; so I interrupted papa at his newspaper to sound him very much as I had sounded her.

"Why doesn't she stay at home, and go out?" he repeated, smiling faintly as he did so. "I suppose she understands her own business; I can't say; but you mustn't say anything of that kind before her. She has done some foolish things, and got herself talked about; and, you'll hear it all, I dare say, time enough. She's not a bit worse than other people, but a much greater fool; so don't ask people those questions; it would vex your mamma; and do nobody any good, do you see?"

Shortly after this, Miss Pouden came down to tell me that we were not going to see Lady Lorrimer that day. I was horribly disappointed, and ran up to the drawing-room, where mamma then was, to learn the cause of our visit being put off.

"Here, dear, is my aunt's note," she said, handing it to me, and scarcely interrupting her consultation with her maid about the millinery they were discussing. It was open, and I read these words:

MY DEAR MABEL,—I must say good-bye a little earlier than I had intended; my plans are upset. I find my native air insupportable, and fly northward for my life! I am thinking at present of Buxton for a few days; the weather is so genial here, that my doctor tells me I may find it still endurable in that cold region. It grieves me not to see your dear faces before I go. Do not let your pretty daughter forget me. I may, it is just possible, return through London—so we may meet soon

again. I shall have left Mivart's and begun my journey before this note reaches you. God bless you, my dear Mabel.

Your affectionate

AUNT.

So, she was actually gone! What a dull day it would be! Well, there was no good in railing at fate. But, was I ever to see that charming lady more?

In my drive that day with Miss Pouden, thinking it was just possible that Lady Lorrimer, whimsical as she was said to be, might have once more changed her mind, I called at Mivart's to inquire. She was no longer there. She had left with bag and baggage, and all her servants, that morning at nine o'clock.

I had called with very little hope of finding that her journey had been delayed, and I drove away with even that small hope extinguished.

She was my Mary Queen of Scots. She had done something too rash and generous for the epicurean, sarcastic, and specious society of London. From the little that papa had said, I conjectured that Lady Lorrimer's secession from society was not quite voluntary; but she interested me all the more. In my dull life the loss of my new acquaintance, so soon, was a real blow. Mamma was not much of a companion to me. She liked to talk of people she knew, and to people who knew them. Except what concerned my dress and accomplishments, we had as yet no topics in common.

Dear Laura Grey, how I missed you now! The resentment I had felt at first was long since quite lost in my real sorrow, and there remained nothing but affectionate regrets.

I take up the thread of my personal narrative where I dropped it on the day of my ineffectual visit at Lady Lorrimer's hotel.

In the afternoon Doctor Droqville came to see mamma. He had been to see Lady Lorrimer that morning, just before she set out on her journey.

"She was going direct to Buxton, as she hinted to you," said Doctor Droqville, "and I advised her to make a week's stay there; when she leaves it, she says she is going on to Westmoreland, and to stay for a fortnight or three weeks at Golden Friars. She's fanciful; there was gout in her family, and she is full of gouty whims and horrors. She is as well as a woman of her years need be, if she would only believe it."

"Have you heard lately from Mr. Carmel?" asked mamma.

I listened with a great deal of interest for the answer.

"Yes, I heard this morning," he replied "He's in Wales."

"Not at Malory?" said mamma.

"No, not at Malory; a good way from Malory."

I should have liked to ask how long he had been in Wales, for I had been secretly offended at his apparent neglect of me; but I could not muster courage for the question.

Next morning I took it into my head that I should like a walk; and with mamma's leave, Miss Pouden and I set out, of course keeping among the quiet streets in our neighbourhood.

While, as we walked, I was in high chat with Miss Pouden, who was chiefly a listener, and sometimes, I must admit, a rather absent one, I raised my eyes and could scarcely believe their report. Not ten yards away, walking up the flagged way towards us, were two figures. One was Lady Lorrimer I was certain. She was dressed in a very full velvet cloak, and had a small book in her hand. At her left, at a distance of more than a yard, walked a woman in a peculiar costume. This woman looked surly, and stamped beside her with a limp, as if one leg were shorter than the other. They approached at a measured pace, looking straight before them, and in total silence.

My eyes were fixed on Lady Lorrimer with a smile, which I every moment expected would be answered by one of recognition from her. But no such thing.

She must have seen me; but nearer and nearer they came. They never deviated from their line of march. Lady Lorrimer continued to look straight before her. It was the sternest possible "cut," inasmuch that I felt actually incredulous, and began to question my first identification.

Her velvet actually brushed my dress as I stood next the railings. She passed me with her head high, and the same stony look.

"Shall we go on, dear?" asked Miss Pouden, who did not understand why we had come to a standstill.

I moved on in silence; but the street being a very quiet one, I turned about for a last look. I saw them ascend the steps of a house, and at the same moment the door opened, and Mr. Carmel came out, with his hat in his hand, and followed the two ladies in. The door was then shut.

We resumed our walk homeward. We had a good many streets to go through, and I did not know my way.

I was confounded, and walked on in utter silence, looking down in confused rumination on the flags under my feet.

Till we got home I did not say a word; and then I sat down in my room, and meditated on that odd occurrence, as well as my perturbation would let me.

It was a strange mixture of surprise, doubt, and intense mortification.

It was very stupid of me not to have ascertained at the time the name of the street which was the scene of this incident. Miss Pouden had never seen either Lady Lorrimer or Mr. Carmel; and the occurrence had not made the least impression upon her. She could not therefore help me, ever so little, next day, to recover the name of the street in which I had stood still for a few seconds, looking at she knew not what.

There was just a film of doubt, derived from the inexplicable behaviour of the supposed Lady Lorrimer.

When I told mamma, she at first insisted it was quite impossible. But, as I persisted, and went into detail, she said it was very odd. She was thoughtful for a little time, and sighed. Then she made me repeat all I had told her, and seemed very uncomfortable, but did not comment upon it. At length she said:

"You must promise me, Ethel, not to say a word about it to your papa. It would only lead to vexation. I have good reasons for thinking so. Speak of it to no one. Let the matter rest. I don't think I shall ever understand some people. But let us talk about it no more."

And with this charge the subject dropped.

CHAPTER XXVIII. A SEMI-QUARREL.

MAMMA did not remain long in town. Bleak as the weather now was, she and papa went to Brighton for a fortnight. Then they went, for a few days, to Malory; and from that, northward, to Golden Friars. I dare say papa would have liked to find Lady Lorrimer there. I don't know that he did.

I, meanwhile, was left in the care of Miss Pouden, who made a very staid and careful chaperon. I danced every day, and pounded a piano, and sang a little, and spoke French incessantly to Miss Pouden. My spirits were sustained by the consciousness that I was very soon to come out.

I was not entirely abandoned to Miss Pouden's agreeable society. Mr. Carmel reappeared. Three times a week he came in, and read, and spoke Italian with me for

an hour, Miss Pouden sitting by; at least, she was supposed to be there on guard; but she really was as often out of the room as in it. One day I said to him:

"You know Lady Lorrimer, my aunt?"

"Yes," he answered, carelessly.

"Did you know she was my aunt?"

"Your great-aunt, yes."

"I wonder, then, why you never mentioned her to me," said I.

"There is nothing to wonder at," he replied, with a smile. "Respecting her, I have no curiosity, and nothing to tell."

"Oh! But you must know something about her—ever so little—and I really know nothing. Why does she lead so melancholy a life?"

"She has sickened of gaiety, I have been told."

"There's something more than that," I insisted.

"She's not young, you know, and society is a laborious calling."

"There's some reason; none of you will tell me," I said. "I used to tell every one everything, until I found that no one told me anything; now, I say, 'Ethel, seal your lips, and open your ears; don't you be the only fool in this listening, sly, suspicious world.' But, if you'll tell me nothing else, at least you'll tell me this. What were you all about when you opened the door of a house, in some street not far from this, to Lady Lorrimer, and an odd-looking woman who was walking beside her, on the day after she had written to mamma to say she had actually left London? What was the meaning of that deception?"

"I don't know whether Lady Lorrimer out-stayed the time of her intended departure or not," he answered; "she would write what she pleased, and to whom she pleased, without telling me. And now I must tell you, if Lady Lorrimer had confided a harmless secret to me, I should not betray it by answering either 'yes' or 'no' to any question. Therefore, should you question me upon any such subject, you must not be offended if I am silent."

I was vexed.

"One thing you must tell me," I persisted. "I have been puzzling myself over her very odd looks that day; and also over the odd manner, and disagreeable countenance of the woman who was walking at her side. Is Lady Lorrimer, at times, a little out of her mind?"

"Who suggested that question?" he asked, fixing his eyes suddenly on me.

"Who suggested it?" I repeated. "No one. People, I suppose, can ask their own questions."

I was surprised and annoyed, and I suppose looked so. I continued:

"That woman looked like a keeper, I fancied, and Lady Lorrimer—I don't know what it was—but there was something so unaccountable about her."

"I don't know a great deal of Lady Lorrimer, but I am grateful to her for, at least, one great kindness, that of having introduced me to your family," he said; "and I can certainly testify that there is no clearer mind anywhere; no suspicion of that kind can approach her; she is said to be one of the cleverest, shrewdest intellects, and the most cultivated, you can imagine. But people say she is an esprit fort, and believes in nothing. It does not prevent her doing a kind office for a person such as I. She has more charity than many persons who make loud professions of faith."

I had felt a little angry during this short dialogue. He was practising reserve, and he looked at one time a little stern, and unlike himself.

"But I want to ask you a question—only one more," I said, for I wished to clear up my doubts.

"Certainly," he said, more like himself.

"About my meeting Lady Lorrimer that day, and seeing you, as I told you." I paused, and he simply sat listening. "My question," I continued, "is this—I may as well tell you; the whole thing appeared to me so unaccountable, that I have been ever since doubting the reality of what I saw; and I want you simply to tell me whether it did happen as I have described?"

At this renewed attack, Mr. Carmel's countenance underwent no change, even the slightest, that could light me to an inference; he said, with a smile:

"It might, perhaps, be the easiest thing in the world for me to answer distinctly, 'no;' but I remember that Dean Swift, when asked a certain question, said, that Lord Somers had once told him never to give a negative answer, although truth would warrant it, to a question of that kind; because if he made that his habit, when he could give a denial, whenever he declined to do so, it would amount to an admission. I think that a wise rule, and all such questions I omit to answer."

"That is an evasion," I replied, in high indignation.

"Forgive me, it is no evasion; it is simply silence."

"You know it is cowardly, and indirect, and—characteristic," I persisted, in growing wrath.

He was provokingly serene.

"Well, let me give you another reason for silence respecting Lady Lorrimer. Your mamma has specially requested me to keep silence on the subject, and in your case, Miss Ethel, her daughter, can I consider that request otherwise than as a command?"

"Not comprehending casuistry, I don't quite see how your promise to papa, to observe silence respecting the differences of the two Churches, is less binding than your promise to mamma of silence respecting Lady Lorrimer."

"Will you allow me to answer that sarcasm?" he asked, flushing a little.

"How I hate hypocrisy and prevarication," I repeated, rising even above my old level of scorn.

"I have been perfectly direct," he said, "upon that subject; for the reason I have mentioned, I can't and won't speak."

"Then for the present, I think, we shall talk upon no other," I said, getting up, going out of the room, and treating him at the door to a haughty little bow.

So we parted for that day.

I understood Mr. Carmel, however; I knew that he had acted as he always did when he refused to do what other people wished, from a reason that was not to be overcome; and I don't recollect that I ever renewed my attack. We were on our old terms in a day or two.

Between the stanzas of Tasso, often for ten minutes unobserved, he talked upon the old themes—eternity, faith, the Church, the saints, the Blessed Virgin. He supplied me with books; but this borrowing and lending was secret as the stolen correspondence of lovers.

I have thought over that strange period of my life; the little books that wrought such wonders, the spell of whose power is broken now; the tone of mind induced by them, by my solitude, my agitations, the haunting affections of the dead; and all these influences reacting again upon the cold and supernatural character of Mr. Carmel's talk. My exterior life had been going on, the rural monotony of Malory, its walks, its boating, its little drives; and now the dawning ambitions of a more vulgar scene, the town life, the excitement of a new world opening. But among these realities, ever recurring and dominating all, there seemed to be ever present a stupendous vision!

So it seemed to me my life was divided between frivolous realities and a gigantic trance.

Into this I receded every now and then, alone and unwatched. The immense perspective of a towering cathedral aisle seemed to rise before me, shafts and ribbed stone, lost in smoke of incense floating high in air; mitres, and gorgeous robes, and golden furniture of the altar, and chains of censers and jewelled shrines, glimmering far off in the tapers' starlight, and the inspired painting of the stupendous Sacrifice reared above the altar in dim reality. I fancied I could hear human voices, plaintive and sublime as the aerial choirs heard high over dying saints and martyrs by faithful ears; and the mellow thunder of the organ, rolling through unseen arches above. Sometimes, less dimly, I could see the bowed heads of myriads of worshippers, "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." It was, to my visionary senses, the symbol of the Church. Always the self-same stupendous building, the same sounds and sights, the same high-priest and satellite bishops; but seen in varying lights, now in solemn beams, striking down, and crossing the shadow in mighty bars of yellow, crimson, green, and purple, through the stained windows, and now in the dull red gleam of the tapers.

Was I more under the influence of religion in this state? I don't believe I was. My imagination was exalted, my anxiety was a little excited, and the subject generally made me more uncomfortable than it did before. Some of the forces were in action which might have pushed me, under other circumstances, into a decided course.

One thing, which logically had certainly no bearing upon the question, did affect me, I now know, powerfully. There was a change in Mr. Carmel's manner which wounded me, and piqued my pride. I used to think he took an interest in Ethel Ware. He seemed now to feel none, except in the discharge of his own missionary duties, and I fancied that, if it had not been for his anxiety to acquit himself of a task imposed by others, and exacted by his conscience, I should have seen no more of Mr. Carmel.

I was a great deal too proud to let him perceive my resentment. I was just as usual. I trifled and laughed, read my Italian and made blunders, and asked questions; and, in those intervals of which I have spoken, I listened to what he had to say, took the books he offered, and thanked

him with a smile, but with no great fervour. The temperature of our town drawing-room was perceptibly cooler than that of Malory, and the distance between our two chairs had appreciably increased. Nevertheless, we were apparently, at least, very good friends.

But terms like these are sometimes difficult to maintain. I was vexed at his seeming to acquiesce so easily in my change of manner, which, imperceptible to any one else, I somehow knew could not be hidden from him.

I had brought down, and laid on the drawing-room table at which we sat, the only book which I then had belonging to Mr. Carmel.

It was rather a dark day. Something in the weather made me a little more cross than usual.

Miss Pouden was, according to her wont, flitting to and fro, and not minding in the least what we read or said.

I laid down my Tasso and laughed. Mr. Carmel looked at me a little puzzled.

"That, I think, is the most absurd stanza we have read. I ought, I suppose, to say the most sublime. But it is as impossible to read it without laughing as to read the rest without yawning."

I said this with more scorn than I really felt, but it certainly was one of those passages in which good Homer nods. A hero's head is cut off, I forget his name—a kinsman, I dare say, of Saint Denis; and he is so engrossed with the battle that he forgets his loss, and goes on fighting for some time.

"I hope it is not very wrong, and very stupid, but I am so tired of the Gerusalemme Liberata."

He looked at me for a moment or two. I think he did not comprehend the spirit in which I said all this, but perhaps he suspected something of it; he looked a little pained.

"But, I hope, you are not tired of Italian? There are other authors."

"Yes; so there are. I should like Ariosto, I dare say. I like fairy tales, and that is the reason, I think, I like reading the lives of the saints and the other books you have been so kind as to lend me."

I said this quite innocently, but there was a great deal of long-husbanded cruelty in it. He dropped his fine eyes to the table, and leaned for a short time on his hand.

"Well, even so, it is something gained to have read them," meditated Mr. Carmel, and looking up at me, he added, "and we never know by what childish instincts

and simple paths we may be led to the sublimest elevations."

There was so much gentleness in his tone and looks that my heart smote me. My momentary compunction, however, did not prevent my going on now that I had got fairly afloat.

"I have brought down the book you were so kind as to lend me last week. I am sure it is very eloquent, but there's so much I cannot understand."

"Can I explain anything?" he began, taking up the book at the same time.

"I did not mean that; no. I was going to return it, with my very best thanks," I said. "I have been reading a great deal that is too high for me, books meant for wiser people and deeper minds than mine."

"The mysteries of faith remain, for all varieties of mind, mysteries still," he answered sadly. "No human vision can pierce the veil. I do not flatter you; but I have met with no brighter intelligence than yours. In death the scales will fall from our eyes. Until then, yea must be yea, and nay, nay, and let us be patient."

"I don't know, Mr. Carmel, that I ought to read these books, without papa's consent. I have imperceptibly glided into this kind of reading. 'I will tell you about Swedenborg,' you said; 'we must not talk of Rome or Luther; we can't agree, and they are forbidden subjects;' do you remember? And then you told me what an enemy Swedenborg was of the Catholic Church; you remember that? and then you read me what he says about vastation, as he calls it; and you lent me the book to read; and when you took it back, you explained to me that his account of vastation differs in no respect from purgatory, and in the same way, when I read the legends of the saints, you told me a great deal more of your doctrine; and in the same way, also, you discussed those beautiful old hymns, so that in a little while, although, as you said, Rome and Luther were forbidden subjects, or rather names, I found myself immersed in a controversy, which I did not understand, with a zealous and able priest! You have been artful, Mr. Carmel."

"Have I been artful in trying to save you?" he answered gently.

"You would not, I think, practise the same arts with other people; you treat me like a fool," I said; "you would not treat that Welsh lady so, whom you visit; I mean—I really forget her name, but you remember all about her."

He rose unconsciously, and looked for

"A good priest," he said, returning, "is no respecter of persons. Blessed should I be if I could beguile a benighted traveller into safety! Blessed and happy were my lot, if I could die in the endeavour thus to save one human soul bent on self-destruction."

His answer vexed me. The theological level on which he placed all human souls did not please me. After all our friendly evenings at Malory, I did not quite understand his being, as he seemed to boast, no "respecter of persons."

"I am sure that is quite right," I said, carelessly; "and very prudent too; because, if you were to lose your life in converting me, or a Hottentot chief, or any one else, you would, you think, go straight to heaven; so, after all, the wish is not altogether too heroic for this selfish world."

He smiled; but there was doubt, I thought, in the eyes which he turned for a moment upon me.

"Our motives are so mixed!" he said; "and death, beside, is to some men less than happier people think; my life has been austere and afflicted; and what remains of it will, I know, be darker. I see sometimes where all is drifting. I never was so happy, and I never shall be, as I have been for a time at Malory. I shall see that place perhaps no more. Happy the people whose annals are dull!" he smiled. "How few believe that well-worn saying in their own case! Yet, Miss Ethel, when you left Malory, you left quiet behind you, perhaps for ever!"

He was silent; I said nothing.

The spirit of what he had said echoed, though he knew it not, the forebodings of my own heart. The late evening sun was touching with its slanting beams the houses opposite, and the cold grimy brick in which the dingy taste of our domestic architecture some forty years before delighted; and as I gazed listlessly from my chair through the window, on the dismal formality of the street, I saw in the same sunlight nothing of those bricks and windows: I saw Malory and the church tower, the trees, the glimmering blue of the estuary, the misty mountains all fading in the dreamy quietude of the declining light, and I sighed.

"Well, then," he said, closing the book, "we close Tasso here. If you care to try Ariosto, I shall be only too happy; shall we commence to-morrow? And as for our other books, those I mean that you were

"I'm not afraid of them," I said; "we shan't break our old Malory custom yet; and I ought to be very grateful to you, Mr. Carmel."

His countenance brightened; but the unconscious reproach of his wounded look still haunted me. And after he was gone, with a confusion of feelings which I could not have easily analysed, I laid my hands over my eyes and cried for some time, bitterly.

THE AMERICAN EPIZOOTIC.

THE ingenious gentlemen who condescend to write the local reports for the New York press have exhausted their learning and talents, in endeavouring to discover or manufacture an appropriate name for the epidemic among horses now raging in the United States. After a brief dalliance with the word "epihippic," they have finally agreed upon an outrageous vocabulary, in which "epizootic" is used to designate the disease generally; "hipporhinorrhea" its earlier symptoms, and "febrequobronchiatis" its latest stages, when hectic fever supervenes and the bronchial tubes are severely affected. We are gravely assured by the Herald that the highest medical authorities have adopted this bizarre nomenclature; but upon turning to the best veterinary writers in America we find that they prefer a phrase of their own invention, and call the epidemic "catarrhal fever." The Canadian veterinary surgeons, however, and those English doctors who have already devoted their attention to the subject, confine themselves simply to the old-fashioned word "influenza," which everybody understands, and which expresses accurately enough the origin, progress, and characteristics of the disease. An influenza among horses, induced, probably, by the long continuance of wet weather and aggravated by damp stabling and moistened food, is the complaint from which America is now suffering, and against which, if it be really contagious, we should do well to take immediate precautions in England.

The epidemic first appeared, in the early part of October, at Buffalo, in the western part of the state of New York. It attracted little notice at that time; a line in the papers, such as our journals might give to an influenza among the horses at Nottingham, being the only record of its origin. But on the 23rd of October the disease developed itself in New York city, and

spread with great rapidity as far south as New Orleans, as far west as Chicago, and as far north as Canada. It attacked the horses of rich and poor alike. The valuable trotting studs, housed in the splendid stables on Long Island, exhibited the same symptoms as the scurvy beasts which drew the tramway cars, and were huddled together in the filth of the tramway sheds. A panic seized upon all owners of horses, and at last upon the general public. The most exaggerated rumours prevailed. The epidemic was said to be caused by a malaria, which would ultimately poison the human as well as the brute creation. Sensation stories were circulated of cows, cats, and dogs, which had been attacked with the same symptoms as the horses, and of men who had caught the infection while attending upon their diseased animals. The horses were reported to go mad, to turn viciously upon the stablemen, to drop down dead without any apparent cause. It is almost needless to say that most of these tales were false; but they had their day, and produced their effect. The newspapers repeated them in a hundred forms, and one energetic editor coolly proposed to shoot all the horses which were not yet attacked, upon the same principle that we blow up unburnt buildings to stop the spread of a great conflagration. Another philosopher argued that the horse was doomed to as complete extinction as the dodo, and that future generations would blush to read that their ancestors had been dependent upon an animal, so inferior to the steam-engine, and consequently so unworthy of the nineteenth century.

Meanwhile, the real inconveniences to the public, impediments to traffic, and interferences with business of all kinds, were not only annoying but productive of heavy pecuniary losses. The American cities have no underground railways, nor do they use the steam railways overground, as we do, to relieve the street traffic, and connect suburban homes with city offices and workshops. Carts and drays for goods and merchandise, omnibuses and tramways for passengers, are their sole means of conveyance, and, for these, horses are indispensable. At the height of the epidemic all the horses were practically useless, and business was at a standstill. The streets were filled with goods which could not be carried to the docks, the railways, or shops. The wharves and warehouses were packed with accumulated merchandise. The working classes were at a loss how to

reach their places of business in the morning, and how to return to their homes at night. Mr. Henry Bergh, the president of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, went into the streets with a large force of assistants, stopped the tramway cars and omnibuses, and ordered the drivers to take their teams back to the stables. The places of amusement were deserted; for the people could not travel to and from the theatres. Some thoroughfares were blocked up with empty cars, others with loaded vans, from which the horses had been unharnessed when they were unable to walk further. The report (afterwards officially contradicted) that the terrible fire at Boston had gained headway because no horses could be obtained to drag the fire-engines, added a new terror to the panic. From almost every American pulpit the clergymen preached upon the horse epidemic. Job's description of a war-horse was the text for a thousand sermons. A day of public fasting and prayer was demanded. The Roman Catholic bishop at Philadelphia issued a special form of supplication for the emergency. In curious contrast to these facts, we find it noted that the old negro song, *Wait for the Waggon*, which had been forgotten for ten years, became suddenly popular again, and was sung, hummed, and whistled everywhere.

There seems to be no dispute as to the symptoms of the epidemic and the manner of its attack. Its premonitory manifestations are a roughened coat, hot mouth, cold feet, and watery discharge from the nostrils. These are followed by a hacking cough, denoting inflammation of the throat and the bronchial tubes. The discharge from the nostrils increases in quantity, becomes thicker in consistency, and assumes a yellowish colour. If the disease be not checked, or if the horse be exposed to hard work, vitiated air, or wet weather, the lungs are next affected, very dangerous symptoms ensue, and, when neglected, are rapidly fatal. If, on the other hand, the disease be dealt with in time, it will run its course within fifteen days, and is in no respect dangerous. Perhaps we may be pardoned if we request the reader to consider these symptoms, compiled from the best American authorities, and then ask himself in what detail they differ from those which attend a heavy cold in the head. Every child has suffered from the same sort of attack which has now prostrated the poor horses in America, and which the reporters have endeavoured to

dignify with the *éclat* of a new and mysterious malady. In their panic the Americans did not perceive this at first, and when the more staid Canadians asserted that the complaint was merely influenza, the New York press indignantly repudiated this simple explanation. The Americans boasted of the biggest country, the biggest organ, the biggest cataract, the biggest cave, and the biggest fire in the world, and they were determined to have the biggest horse-disease. They have had it. Perhaps, on the whole, they have had it more severely in the newspapers than in the stables; but their national pride could not fail to be gratified with the extent and the miseries of the infliction, and their national inventiveness has been taxed to the utmost to devise novel remedies for the influenza, and wonderful substitutes for the horses that were stretched in the straw.

Our prosaic pen modestly shrinks from describing the scenes already pictured by the lambent lead-pencils of our Transatlantic contemporaries. Let us use their own words. On the 2nd of November they report "the strange sickness in the streets and stables still." The next day, "eighty-five equines shake off the mortal coil by the kindly means of the epihippic." Then we find "trade obstructed by lack of teams," and "suburban settlers crowding the city corners, horseless and homeless." Next, in consequence of "the progress of the pestilence, and prior to the preventive proceedings of the philozoologists," we see "strange and sad scenes in the slumbering streets," "the drive to death," "sick beasts staggering and panting with pain before the burdened street cars," and "the poor horses finding relief from the pains of toil only in the toils of pain." After this there is a period of gloom. Our feelings are harrowed by the sight of "a horseless and helpless metropolis in mourning." "Harlem-lane," the favourite drive of New Yorkers, "is a howling wilderness." Oxen are hired at from eight to twelve dollars a day, to come in from the country and haul the drays and vans. To use the artful aid of the apt alliteration of our American allies, "the bucolic beasts of burden are brushing through the bustle of Broadway," and there is "a processional pageant of bucolic Pan through the business thoroughfares." The whole country seems infected. Towing traffic is suspended along the lines of canals. "The horrors of hipporhinnorrhæa" are experienced everywhere. "The epizcotical affliction is all over the land." At length, on November

the 5th, come "help and hope for the thirty thousand sick horses," and we reach "the last days of the mysterious affliction" in New York city. The horses are getting well there, and to work. We hear again, "the turmoil of travel and traffic, the rush and roar of business," and are confidentially assured (in large capitals) that "typhoid laryngite is growing beautifully less, and pink-eye appearing," whatever that may mean. The metropolis is relieved, but the disease continues its ravages throughout the provinces. The oxen are whisked away to western cities. Butchers and bakers pull their own carts about at Chicago. A new steam tramway car is tested at Philadelphia, where all traffic has been stopped. The iron mills at Pittsburg cannot work, because no coal can be obtained. "Nineteen-twentieths" of the horses and mules at Washington are diseased. The malady breaks out in Maine and in Michigan, close to the Canada line. Telegrams from San Francisco announce that all the most valuable animals are being sent to the plains. Mr. Russel White, an engine-driver, is reported to have taken the infection from his horses in Boston. A horse is attacked at the agricultural fair at Richmond. The races have to be postponed at New Orleans. Thus matters stand at our latest advices, and there seems little doubt that the influenza "will run its cruel course throughout the continent."

As in every other case of colds, time, rest, dieting, and a very little relaxing medicine were found to be the best remedies for the horse epidemic. Of course, all sorts of specifics were recommended and advertised. The American doctor who could not cure small-pox directly, but could throw the patient into fits, and then settle the fits with his patent annihilator, finds at last a rival among the veterinary surgeons. One professor suggests curing the horses by means of a Turkish bath; "it may be expensive," he urges, "but it will be found effectual." The trifling difficulties in regard to building the baths and importing equine shampoos are, apparently, not worth consideration. This gentleman is eclipsed by a professor who has already cured thirty horses, not by the Turkish bath, but by the Russian vapour bath. The horses, "it is reported"—suggestive phrase!—belong to Messrs. Coleman and Volk (no address), and "the treatment was suggested by its effectual use in curing Mr. Volk himself." Another surgeon pooh-poohs baths, and boldly declares in favour of

bleeding. "The blood is evidently diseased," he insists; "let us get rid of the blood and we also get rid of the disease." True; but is it unfair for us to add (since our New York contemporary neglected to do so), that we may also get rid of the horse? Mr. Harry Hill, who is introduced as "the well-known veteran sportsman," claims to have been very successful with his specific. He places a brick in a bag, pours in hot vinegar, and fastens the bag over the horse's nose, so that "the aromatic fumes arising from the brick penetrate the nostrils." No; this is not a misprint. The recipe distinctly says "the aromatic fumes from the brick," not from the vinegar; and, indeed, of what use the brick could possibly be, unless for its aromatic fumes, we cannot explain. This is called "an old backwoods remedy," probably because bricks are so plentiful in the backwoods. Brevet Major-General Rufus Ingalls, assistant quartermaster-general of the United States army, issues an official circular in which he orders his mode of treatment to be adopted for the horses of the regular army in the department of the east. Commencing, like Mr. Hill, with a bag, he leaves out the brick and the hot vinegar, and substitutes boiled oats, with which the horse's head is to be thoroughly steamed. Carbolic disinfectant, or leather, is then to be burned in a shallow pan under the horse's nose, and the feed is to be moistened with tar-water. If this be not sufficient, a drench of laudanum, nitrate of potassa, and spirits of nitric ether is to be given, night and morning. When the animal is convalescent, a ball of gentian and ginger is recommended to stimulate his appetite. An embrocation of linseed oil, turpentine, hartshorn, and tincture of cantharides is ordered for the throat, and a handful of wood-ashes, mixed with salt, for the feed trough. General Ingalls adds: "It is assumed that the horses are never overworked, properly exercised at all times, fed with wholesome forage, regularly groomed, kept warm, and housed in clean, dry, and well-ventilated stables, with plenty of fresh air and sunshine." If these assumptions are correct, it is not too much to hope that the happy animals may very quickly recover—and we know of many human beings who might envy them their regimen and their quarters.

When so many eminent doctors disagree, we shall certainly not pretend to be infallible. It did not require the sad experiences of the rinderpest to convince us that a prevalent disease among domestic

animals is a very serious matter. Although we believe that the American epizootic is not contagious, and that the long sea voyage would give it time to run its course, yet we accept in good faith, and are very grateful for, the information forwarded to us by a New York editor in regard to certain horses that have been shipped for this country while suffering from the epidemic. Our law of libel, enacted to meet the requirements of a different epoch, might hold us responsible for damages to property if we were to publish the names of the owners of the horses and of the vessels upon which they were embarked, as our correspondent suggests. But it may secure the same object, and can certainly do no harm to any one, if we ask the proper authorities to subject all animals coming to England from America to a professional examination by a veterinary surgeon before permitting them to be landed. This simple precaution would be inexpensive, and the owners of the horses would not care to object to it if the animals were well, and could not reasonably object to it if they displayed any of the symptoms of the epidemic. In the same spirit, although we are of the opinion that the ravages of the influenza in America have been greatly exaggerated, we are perfectly willing to admit that the discomforts, annoyances, and injuries to business and commerce caused by the sudden illness of thousands of horses are not to be lightly underestimated, and that, during this very exceptional weather, it is best to be prepared for all eventualities. We conclude, therefore, by repeating the mode of treatment for the American horse influenza, adopted with complete success by Doctor M'Eachran, of Montreal, and recommended by Mr. Robert Bonner, the owner of the most famous trotting stud in the United States, and by the veterinary editor of Wilkes's Spirit, the recognised chronicle of the American turf. Doctor M'Eachran uses carbolic acid as a disinfectant; feeds the horses upon linseed tea, oatmeal gruel, carrots, apples, and hay dampened and well shaken, but prohibits dry oats; gives them gentle walking exercise, and administers preparations of potash, chlorate of potash, or nitrate of potash, half a tablespoonful daily, mixed with liquorice powder. In cases where chills supervene, he adds two ounces of liquor ammonia acetate and half an ounce of nitrous ether every two hours till perspiration sets in, or the fit passes away. The advice which Doctor M'Each-

ran offers as to cleanliness and ventilation is, fortunately, not required in the majority of English stables.

ONE JULY.

If frozen hearts could warm them at the fire
 Of memory's fallen altars, all were well;
 But scattered ashes from a funeral pyre
 Are thoughts of love that has been. So it fell
 That, when the fiery season was at flush,
 His love found words; such words as might beguile
 A thrice-wronged heart to faith. Now noon's hot
 hush
 Is deathly, and so wan is Nature's smile.
 This July morning all is light and glee,
 But what are songs and sunbeams now to me?
 Hot! golden bright, a boat upon a stream,
 Lazily urged through shallows lily-cumbered.
 That languorous liquid ripple many a dream
 Brings back to me. Cool ashen shadows slumbered,
 Low-pulsing like a sleeper's breath, beneath
 The tremulous willow curtains. There we drifted
 In dusk as cool as is the west wind's breath,
 Save that from where the verdant roof was rifted,
 One vagrant sunbeam lit, and touched his brow.
 There is no glory in the sunshine now.
 Does he remember one of all the words,
 The fervent words, that linger in my ear?
 Or, like the lavish songs of last year's birds,
 Are they forgotten? Are they worth a tear,
 Love-vows that, like the zephyrs, are but air
 That lightly stirred, soon slumbers? Yet those eyes
 Looked truth. Ah, surely things so very fair
 Should not be false. That glance! the blush would
 rise.
 His burning words—ah me! how should they fail?—
 Brought roses to my cheeks. He left them pale.
 Roses! Ah yes! July hath plenty yet,
 But where's the bloom he begged from out my
 breast?
 I would have dropped it down the stream; all wet
 He snatched it. Well, it surely had been best
 The stealthy wave had borne it from his hand,
 Before it grew a burden to his heart;
 For though the flowers of that sunny land
 Where he is gone are fair, methinks a smart
 Would prick his spirit when his hand should move
 To cast it from him, as he cast my love.
 July! I love it not. 'Tis very fair,
 And sunny-bright, and passion-warm as he;
 But there's a burden on its sultry air,
 A death-scent in its roses. Still I see
 A boat, a dancing stream, those willows cool,
 An errant beam, two steadfast-seeming eyes.
 I see, I love to see them. Ah fond fool!
 Long looking for a dawn that shall not rise,
 Hath tired the eyes that can no longer weep.
 'Tis evening with my heart, and I would sleep.

STUDIES ON THE LINE.

I CANNOT remember at what time, or in
 what remote corner of the world, I once
 read a magazine article by a very dear
 friend of mine, describing, with the force
 and vividness which she never loses, a
 group of second-class passengers on the
 Southampton Railway. The idea of such
 a "study on the line" struck me at the time
 as a remarkably good one; and it recurred to
 me a few days since on the Euston-square
 platform, as I launched myself on my first
 railway journey upon English ground after

a five years' wandering in all countries from Lapland to Arabia, and from Spain to Turkestan, which might have done credit to a queen's messenger, or an F.R.G.S. "Nothing like contrast," said I to myself; "people tell me I write too much about the Continent—so here goes for something thoroughly English. I'll just take notes of all the people I meet from this to Birkenhead, and see what kind of story it will make."

There is a pithy anecdote (none the worse for being somewhat old) of a famous Spanish brigand who, a few days before his death, was overheard encouraging an unsuccessful débutant in the science of direct taxation by arguments drawn from his own experience: "Be of good cheer, my son; all will yet be well. I, too, when I first became a robber, was often in sore straits; but as often as I began to despair, Heaven never failed to send a rich traveller to my relief." This salutary experience is signally verified in my own case; for scarcely have I come to the above determination, when a tall, spare, middle-aged, keen-looking man, with a livery coat over his arm and a black cockade in his hat, steps into my compartment and greets me with a civil "Mornin', sir!" I instinctively feel that the coming man has arrived. The groups on the platform, indeed, are sufficiently diversified; ruddy-faced school-boys, munching their three-pennyworths of indigestion; nervous old ladies bewildering the guards with frantic inquiries about their luggage; elderly gentlemen in bow-windowed waistcoats; and clusters of pretty girls, striving to appear unconscious of the admiring glances directed at them; but none of these interest me as much as the silent, self-contained, business-like John Bull who has just taken his seat opposite me. Through the subtle instinct whereby travellers recognise each other, not less than by the handy way in which he places his luggage ready for instant removal, and slips his hand into his waistcoat-pocket to make sure that his ticket can be produced at a moment's notice, I divine him to be a veteran of the road and the rail, whose experiences must be well worth hearing. I bait my hook accordingly. Opening my despatch-bag, I contrive to let fall a Cossack cap of black sheepskin, and a Turkish fez, at the feet of my companion, whose eye brightens with a look of recognition.

"There's two old friends o' mine," says he, "though I wouldn't ha' thought o' meetin' 'em here neither. I s'pose you've

travelled a goodish bit in foreign parts, now, ain't you?"

"Pretty well, counting my run to the south of Arabia last spring; I'm just on my way to Brazil by way of a change. I needn't ask if you're an old traveller—I can see it for myself."

"Indeed, sir; how so, if I may ask?"

"By your having all your luggage ready to hand, and feeling for your ticket the moment you got in."

The iron man gives a grim chuckle.

"You're not far off the mark either; I have been a good deal about in my time. The longest trip I ever had was my first, and that was with a young swell from Oxford (the Honourable William N., if you happen to know him), who had got something wrong with his chest, and was ordered abroad by the doctors. Well, he was terrible bad for the first few days, poor young gen'lman; and all the way to Gibraltar, it seemed as if his trip would do him more harm than good. And I was sorry for it, too—for after you've been with any man for a good while together, lookin' after him and takin' care of him, you can't help havin' a kind of likin' for him." (The last words are uttered in the half-apologetic tone characteristic of John Bull when pleading guilty to any touch of good feeling.) "But by the time we got to Malta, bless you! what with the sea-air and the good feedin', and the walkin' on deck, and livin' quietly and sensibly, 'stead of sittin' up all night over cards, and brandy, and rotgut wines, like them madcap young men at college—(beg pardon, sir)—he was quite another man—his face was so fresh and bright like, that his own father wouldn't ha' known him; and as for eatin', the day afore we got to Malta, the captain says to him, 'Mr. N.,' says he, 'if you go on like this every day, you'll breed a famine aboard afore we get to Constantinople!'"

"You went as far as Constantinople, then?"

"We did that, sir, and a deal further too; right away up into the Crimea, where I dessay you've been yourself. Very fine country it is, too, 'specially round Sevastopol, where my gen'lman and me mostly were. There was rather a queer adventure befel me there that mayhap you might like to hear. You know that road along the coast from Balaklava to Yalta? Well, I was a ridin' along there with my master's bag and my own (we'd left all the heavy luggage at Wetzel's Hotel, in Sevastopol), and my master was a mile or two in the rear a takin' sketches, when I, like a fool,

thought to cut off a corner by follerin' one o' the by-paths, and like all short cuts it turned out a precious long un! I hadn't been on it five minutes before I got in such a puzzle that I might have thought myself back in the maze at Hampton Court, only there wasn't a man up aloft to holler out and put one right, worse luck. So finding that all my huntin' about for the right road only got me deeper into the mess, I made up my mind just to hold on till I came to some human habitation, no matter what, and then ask my way. Sure enough, before very long, I lighted upon a little bit of a village that seemed to have strayed in among the hills and never found its way out again; and about half-way along it was rather a neater-looking cottage than the rest, and at the door stood a clean, decent-looking woman, with a fresher face than you'd expect in a Russian; so I up to her and asked my road in as good lingo as I could muster. The words weren't out o' my mouth when she bust out laughin', and says, in as good English as I ever heard, 'Spin your yarn in the Queen's English, young man. You'll find it a deal easier!' Well, I *was* took aback; but she only laughed again, and brought me in, and told me how she'd been the wife of a quartermaster belonging to the fleet before Sevastopol, who'd died just about the end of the siege; and when the war was over she stayed behind, and set up this little hotel kind of place where I found her, and made it pay very well. 'In another two years or so, please God,' says she, 'I'll have saved enough to live on, and then back I go to dear old England for good and all.' And so, sir, she gave me a reg'lar blow-out of bread and cheese, and wouldn't take a penny for it neither; 'for,' says she, 'it ain't every day as one sees an English face out here.' And she put me on the road to Yalta, and I got there all right a couple of hours later."

"A very good adventure too. But what did you think of Constantinople?"

"Well, it's like many a man I've met with in my time—more outside than inside. I don't like those old Turks; I don't care who knows it; and I think it was a burning shame sending so many good fellows to be killed out there, just to keep a parcel o' fellows in Europe who'd be a deal better out of it. However, I did fall in with one good thing there, and that was an English chum. We hadn't been together five minutes, him and me, before we were quite like old pals; and after that, whenever we had a bit of a holiday, the

first thing one of us did was to go and look for t'other, and take him off on a jaunt. Poor Tom Robinson!—such a bright, helpful, hopeful fellow he was!—seemed fairly to enjoy findin' anybody in a scrape, just for the pleasure of helpin' him out again. But one day, when I went to hunt him up, there was a strange man in his place, who says to me, 'Robinson's got fever, and they've took him to the hospital.' So away I went, and there I found poor old Tom lookin' terrible pale and thin, but with the same jolly smile as ever. 'Old man,' says he, 'I've had a sharpish bout, but I think I shall pull through now.' 'Tom,' says I, 'I'll come and see you every day till you do.' So I visited him for four days, and on the fifth the doctor said he was mending; and I, hearing that, and being very busy, thought I might let him shift for a day or two. And the next time I went, sir, Tom was dead."

"Bletchley! Bletch-ley!"

My companion hastily clutches his baggage. "I get out here, sir; I wish you a pleasant journey!" And with a hearty shake of the hand he is gone.

"Well," soliloquised I, "there's study Number One at least, and not a bad one either. Let us see what we shall get to succeed him."

The words are barely uttered when a stout, jolly-looking man opens the carriage door, lifts in a sturdy little fellow of eleven or twelve, with the genuine country tan upon his cheeks and forehead, and says in a loud cheery voice, "Here, guard; just look after this little chap as far as Warwick, and see that he don't get carried on. I dare say this gentleman will kindly keep an eye on him too."

I read the story at a glance. The father's rough, kindly slap on the shoulder, and resolutely cheery voice, the fresh little face, in which the grief of a first parting is struggling with the inborn firmness of the Englishman, the appreciative smile of the old guard, who has evidently seen the same thing scores of times already—all bring back to me vividly the almost forgotten morning when I too went forth to school for the first time. I hoist the young adventurer to a seat opposite mine; his baggage is handed in after him; the father's "God bless you, my boy!" mingles with the slam of the closing door, and away we go.

So long as his father's eye was upon him, the boy has borne up bravely; but now that he is fairly alone and unobserved, his face begins to work, and presently (I have

prudently absorbed myself in a book) he looks very hard out of the window, and—is it the sun that makes his eyes water so? So he would doubtless tell you if you were to ask him, for he comes of a race little given to demonstration, and only too prone to stifle their softer feelings; yet many a brave fellow whose eyes were bright enough in the face of Russian bayonets and Sepoy grapeshot, has shed such tears as these, and had no cause to be ashamed of them.

But the griefs of boyhood (thank God!) are naturally evanescent; and before ten minutes are over, the young knight-errant, having delved into his provision basket, and accepted my offer of two or three oranges, is rattling away merrily enough.

"I'm going to school near Warwick, and they say there's a stream close by the school, and I'll get lots of swimming and fishing—won't it be jolly? Father says that if I get a prize, he'll give me a pony in the Midsummer holidays—ain't that prime? Cousin Tom's been there for a year, and he's bigger than me, and says he'll look after me a bit at first, and see that they don't lick me too much—though I don't think they'll do much of that neither. I licked a bigger boy than me t'other day, who shied stones at my sister's pet dog" (and the little Paladin doubles a fist about the size of a large plum, and looks quite truculent). "Have you ever been to Warwick? How do you like it? Is it a big place?"

And so on for half an hour; while the guard looks in every now and then with a cheery "How are you, my young horficer?" and a pleasant fireside look which makes me think that he must have a little Tom or Harry of his own waiting for him somewhere along the line. At last we come to Warwick.

"Bye-bye," says the boy, jumping out with quite a manly air. "And, guard, please see if there's a man and a gig waiting for me."

And off goes Number Two in triumph. I am still following him with my eyes, when a deep voice makes itself heard beside me. "'Say, master, do this here train go to Stafford?" And at my affirmative reply, in lumbers a big, stalwart, heavy-looking man in tattered fustian, whose whole stock-in-trade seems to consist of a little bundle, and an enormous pickaxe thickly crusted with red clay. Rather an unpromising Number Three at first sight; but I have long since learned to distrust appearances, and I at once set myself to draw out

served, as usual with the true Englishman when among strangers; but having once assured himself that I am in no way disposed to treat him *de haut en bas*, he opens out pretty freely. Upon his own showing, he gets pretty good wages, about two-thirds of which he spends in beer; and he tells me (with evident pride in his own cuteness, poor fellow!) that at the last place where he worked, he shared another man's room and bed, "and saaved two or dree shillun' for beer, see thee!" He is now going to Stafford to visit his brother-in-law, and look out for another job. "Hap, I'll find summut goin' as 'ull gi' me a shillun' or two." Poor fellow! The English metal beneath is still good and true; but it has been sorely dimmed and rusted.

"Stafford! Stafford!"

The giant clutches his bundle, and rises lazily to his feet, like a half-awakened Samson. A splendid picture he makes, standing up like a tower in his massive height and strength, a living embodiment of the sturdy English spirit which has wrought such great deeds heretofore. As he passes me I hold out my hand in farewell. The Colossus hesitates.

"My han's 'ull nobbut muck thee, master—they be tarrible dirty!"

"Never mind, my lad. Mine have been dirtier than that, many a time. A good English hand-shake never hurt any one yet."

The man's face brightens, and he grasps my hand with a force which makes it tingle to the wrist. Another moment, and he is gone too—the third of my shadowy dramatic personæ. Who will be the next?

"Strappin' chap that, sir. Make a good recruit, wouldn't he?"

I start and look round, recollecting for the first time that I have another companion. At the other end of the carriage sits a short, wiry, trim-looking man of perhaps three or four-and-twenty, with black hair cropped closely round a handsome sunburned face, which wears the nameless air of power and self-reliance that stamps the trained soldier.

"I suppose you've had a pretty good spell of service, then, my lad, since you have such a sharp eye for a recruit?"

"Well, nothin' to brag about, sir, but enough to give me a taste o' what it's like. I sarved for a bit wi' the old Fourth—Queen's Own, you know—and then they drafted me into the reserve; and now I'm just agoin' down to jine the camp on the

have twenty-seven days of it out in the open, so I hopes as the weather'll hold up. They gives us a good bounty, too—better'n the milisher. They get's only one pound one shilling, and ourn two pounds eleven shillings."

"So you have the pull of the militia, then?"

"Yes; but then, don't yer see, it works two ways. If there's a war, back I goes to jine my old regiment, right slap; and there, yer see, the milisher has the pull o' me. Not as I minds that much, neither; for if a man is a soldier, he'd better be doin' summut than be doin' nowt."

"And do they feed you well in the reserve?"

"Oh, well enough for the matter o' that; eight ounces of meat a day, without bone, and bread to match; and the pay's tenpence a day, and a penny for liquor besides. I'm glad it's to Chester we're agoin', for I ain't seed the old town for a goodish bit, and I'm a Chester man, yer see, myself."

"Are you? Then you belong to one of the finest old towns in England. I know Chester well, and a very pleasant remembrance I shall always have of it."

The soldier puts forth a strong brown hand, and grips mine like a vice. "Very glad to hear you say so, sir; I al'ays stands up for the old town myself, and I likes to hear any other chap do it. Here's the karackter as they've giv' me, if you care to look."

"And a very good one it is; I'm glad you don't agree with a townsman of yours, who used to tell me that 'a bad karackter's better nor a good karackter, for a good karackter takes a sight o' maintainin', but a bad karacter maintains hisself.'"

The Cestrian laughs. "Ay, there's plenty o' them stories a-knockin' about the old town, and very good they are, some on 'em. Mayhap you've heerd o' old Jim Jones, a terrible near chap he was, as nigh starved hisself and all his folk; how he once axed another chap to dinner, and shows him two little chops not big enough to feed a sparrer, and says to him, 'You see your dinner.' 'Yes,' says t'other chap, forkin' 'em both, 'but I don't see yourn.'"

And so we rattle on, till at length, with a long creaking groan, the train comes to a standstill besides the great Sahara of a platform, which spans the station at Crewe. Scarcely have we halted, when my companion suddenly exclaims, "Yonder's two old friends o' mine," and leaping out, is instantly exchanging greetings with two

young girls, very neatly and plainly dressed, who have just disembarked from another train. While the three are endeavouring to compress into five minutes a hundred eager inquiries after common friends, I survey the two new-comers. One of them is merely a good-looking English girl of the working class, but the other's appearance rivets my attention at once. She is lame of one foot, evidently moving with pain and difficulty, but her face, drawn and worn as it is with constant suffering, wears an expression so sweet, so gentle, so uncomplaining, that one might well have kissed her for very love of it. It is a face that tells its own story—a story of quiet unassuming goodness, of heroic self-forgetfulness, of cruel suffering bravely borne, of meek submission to an unremovable burden.

"She's just one of God's angels, yon lass," says my companion, as we start again, his English reserve giving way to a burst of honest admiration. "It's good ten years ago that she was lamed with a fall, and what she's had to bear would ha' made many a man give in; but she's as quiet and good over it as a child at its mother's breast. There's none like her for doing a good turn; and down where she lives, there's not a soul as wouldn't kiss the very dust off her feet. It's a mortal pity as there ain't nobody in the world 'arf good good enough for her; she'd make a right good wife for any man."

A question rises to the tip of my tongue, but is checked by the fear of indiscretion, and the conversation runs upon indifferent subjects till we reach Chester, when another hearty shake of the hand parts me and my new acquaintance for ever.

Shadows, shadows all! And yet of the many things for which I have to be thankful, it is not the least that among the changing figures which have flitted across my life, there have been so many to leave behind them memories which are very pleasant to recal.

THE ALMANACK CROP.

WHETHER with a k, as in England, or an h at its end, as in France, the almanack is an annual production which appears in the market at about the same time as fresh Smyrna figs, French prunes, and Lyons chestnuts. Almanack is no progeny of the Latin races, neither is it an offshoot from a Teutonic or Anglo-Saxon stock; the French, therefore, may employ one, while we prefer, as its final letter, another of Cadmus's

invention, without the difference becoming cause of serious quarrel.

With very rare exceptions, indeed, our over-the-water friends treat almanacks in a way that is anything but serious, making them the vehicles of pleasant nonsense, not to say actual stupidity and folly. They (the almanacks) issue from their printing-houses in the month of November, in swarms as thick as cockchafers in May. They address themselves to all sorts and conditions of men and women—to street politicians, singers, smokers, dancers, cooks, cocottes, dames and demoiselles, but, above all, to gossips and laughers. Those which profess to stick to any particular line of subject, and to give information on any special pursuit or relaxation, are apt to have not much that is new about them, except the title-page (or only the date) and the calendar—possibly in consequence of their publisher's conviction that good things cannot be too frequently impressed upon the memory.

Most of these pretentious little books are sold for the moderate price of fifty centimes, or fivepence. The *Almanach des Bons Conseils*, or of Good Advice, now in its eight-and-fortieth year, costs no more than one penny-halfpenny, symbolising the cheapness in which that commodity is held. The *Good Counsel*, however, is not overdone. The dose is just sufficient to justify the title. It calls on tipsy people to reflect. "Dear drunkard," it says, "drinking is not so diverting as you think. Out of one hundred and seventy-six insane cases received at Charenton, how many have been brought there by the bottle? Sixty! And out of eighty-two paralytics, how many drunkards? Twenty-eight! True, you sin with a crowd, but you are none the less a sinner. At Amiens the consumption of drams is eighty thousand per day, costing four thousand francs, which sum would purchase six or seven-and-twenty thousand pounds of bread, or eight thousand pounds of meat. At Rouen five million quarts of eau-de-vie are retailed in a year. In Manchester they drink drams for a million sterling. But I am glad to inform you, Monsieur l'Ivrogne, that tipsiness will cost you still dearer, because the taxes on spirits are increased. And don't call the law unjust. When you are tipsy you are a noxious animal—dangerous, perhaps." With more home truths, which none can deny, but few obey. The rest is composed of serious and—marvellous in a French almanack—moral and evangelically religious reading.

The *Almanach Manuel de la Bonne*

Cuisine et de la Maitresse de Maison—the Housemistress's Manual of Good Cookery, opens with a calender of good cheer for every month, if not for every pocket. I dare not guarantee that the body of the treatise, two hundred pages, is annually renewed, but I will say that, for fivepence you get a tolerably complete cookery-book, containing not a few knowing wrinkles, such as boiling a turbot in milk and salt to increase its natural delicacy. And with a proper turbot kettle (rhomboidal or lozenge-shaped—rhombus is Latin for a turbot) the quantity required is moderate, especially if we remember that country milk-and-water is often equivalent to London milk.

The manual gives receipts for making some forty different potages or soups, besides a variety of other culinary information, and is certainly cheap at the price.

Here we are! Room for Mr. Merryman, represented by *The Wags' Almanack*, *L'Almanach of Farceurs and Friends of Joy*; a comical collection of farces, puns, burlesques, merry discourses, sermons, conundrums, charades, comic anecdotes, illustrated rebuses, and bons mots, preceded by a comic calendar.

The entertainment, however, scarcely answers to the play-bill. The preliminary flourish of trumpets is a little too loud and brassy. The most telling jokes are those which are introduced with unpretending gravity, nor is it given to every mortal to be waggish and comical at all times at will. The *Friends-of-Joy's Almanack* for 1873 includes, literally, some very tragical mirth, videlicet, *The Funeral Oration on Michel Morin*, beadle in the church of the parish and village of Beauséjour, in Picardy, deceased on the 1st of May, 1734, pronounced in honour of the defunct, in the presence of the inhabitants of the said locality, on the day of his interment.

This speech has not a single quality in common with Goldsmith's immortal, "Good people all with one accord, Lament for Madame Blaise, Who never wanted a good word—From those who spoke her praise." To make up for the deficiency, we have thrown in his epitaph, concluding with "A quarter of an hour before his death they say that he was still alive!" the whole being supplemented with the epitaph on Michel Morin's donkey, which we suspect to have been written by the donkey himself.

Hardly more exhilarating is the last will and testament (authentic) of Jean Frise-à-Poil, an illustrious hairdresser, residing in

Woman-without-a-head-street, Paris. This will was opened at the office of Maître Plumitif, notary, Rue de la Parcheminerie (notaries and advocates in France take the title, by courtesy, of Maître So-and-so). The legacies bequeathed are after the pattern of our own inspirations on the 1st of April. They comprise: A dozen goats'-hair plates, shaped like a needle's head; a curry-comb worn out in grooming a bronze horse; a cock to draw oil out of a wall; two sacks of wool shorn from eggshells; a wimble to bore a hole in the moon; a cage containing a dozen phoenixes dancing the tight rope to the sound of thunder; a bottomless basket full of divulged secrets; the moon's left eye to serve as a staircase lamp; besides numerous other valuables. To Maître Plumitif himself, the notary, is left, as a special mark of esteem, the sum of one thousand francs (in case the hazards of his career should take him to the Bagne of Toulon, and thence to Cayenne) to serve for pocket-money by the way.

The Comic Calendar may be shortly summarised. The greatest saint, is Saint Vaast; the mildest, Saint Clément; the most welcome, Saint Opportune; the lightest, Saint Léger; the most wished for, Saint Désiré; the most respected, Saint Honoré; the most immovable, Saint Roch; the saint for whom you would sacrifice father and mother, is Saint Louis (d'or); the most consummate (consommée), is Sainte Julienne (soup); the saint who most frequently prevents your eating omelettes, is Saint Encher (œufs chers; dear eggs); the saint who I hope will most frequently visit you—and me too—is Saint Bonaventure.

Conundrums won't often bear translation. Here is one; but is it new, and what country gave it birth?

What is the difference between a woman and a looking-glass?

A woman speaks without reflecting; a looking-glass reflects without speaking.

And this is the Almanach des Farceurs.

In England the practice is not unknown of converting an almanack—even a good, practical, serious almanack—into a wall or hoarding on which to stick posters, puffs, and advertisements. Our Gallic neighbours do the same, in a different way. The almanack is often the announcement of a journal, and of the publications issued from the office of that journal. Illustrated newspapers adorn their almanacks with woodcuts issued during the preceding year.

Now, there is or was (for those things

are ephemeral) a weekly journal called *Le Tintamarre*, The Thundering Noise, which pleases and represents one class of French minds. The *Almanach du Tintamarre* is the annual representative of the journal. Only, as not every one who will can be comical, neither can every one who would be a thunderer, but roars at times "an it were a sucking dove." The *Tintamarre's* reader, in default of thunder, is sometimes obliged to content himself with a five-penny drum.

We will not be so ill-natured as to translate the stanzas on The First Kiss of Love, ending with "Faugh! get away; you've been eating garlick!" nor to analyse severely the pun—hardly worthy of a Jupiter Tonans—"The Jesuits, driven out of Germany, have only to go to America. They will be sure to find the institutions of l'Ohio là (of Loyola there); or this, "They say that at Berlin the air is unhealthy. In their own country, then, the Prussians have not the serene air they had in France." A fairer specimen of these would-be uproarious almanacks, and of their parental journals, is *Tintamarre's* mode of dealing with the gambling question.

Scene, the capital of Kin-Téka-Torz, one of the most powerful principalities in the Moon. The prince, Bongogo, says to his prime minister, Roublardas, "I have been pondering seriously all night. My people are drifting on to perdition. Gambling is their ruin. Give me paper to write a decree, as follows: 'Considering that gaming is a passion which takes all the strength out of our unhappy country, I, Prince Bongogo, ordain that every game of chance, no matter what, is absolutely forbidden throughout our principality. Our well-beloved minister, Roublardas, is empowered to imprison every citizen who shall disobey the present decree.'"

Next morning, Bongogo, stretched on a divan, smokes his after-breakfast pipe while practising tricks with a pack of cards. He hears a great noise in the court of his palace, and, looking out of window, beholds it crowded with more than forty thousand persons.

"Prince!" exclaimed Roublardas, rushing in, "Where am I to put them all? I have stuck sixty thousand in the library. The prisons are full to overflowing——"

"Full of whom, of what?"

"The gamblers your highness ordered me to arrest. Not a single citizen is innocent. Take a score of them at hazard, and you will see."

"Trot a few up-stairs then. The haul

is more considerable than I expected. This flashy-looking fellow, what game was he playing at? Where are the gambling apparatus seized?"

"Here; scraps of stock-jobbing papers. The prisoner bought yesterday sixty thousand francs in the four per cents, which he did not want the least in the world, and sold them this morning to another person who stood in still less need of them. He gained thirty thousand francs on the transaction, by forestalling one of Hablas's telegrams which was sure to cause the funds to rise."

"You call that gambling, eh? Perhaps it is. Very well; take him out and impale him. And the next one; what has he done?"

"He is a corn merchant. When he thinks the harvest will be bad, he buys up heaps of wheat and waits for a rise in prices. If it comes, he gains thousands; if it doesn't come, he loses."

"You call that, too, gambling? Perhaps you are right. Impale him forthwith."

"But, highness, I have a hundred and fifty thousand prisoners who have taken 'obligations de la ville,' because there is a prize of a hundred thousand francs. Others have put their savings in insane investments, because they were promised seventeen per cent interest. Before the year was out, the capital was lost. Others bet on races. They stake forty sous on a horse they have never seen, in the hope of winning fifty francs. In short, highness, without reckoning those of your subjects who openly play at roulette and trente-et-quarante, we have not found a single creature who does not indulge in the propensity to gamble. All, more or less, are worshippers of luck."

"The deuce! But we can't impale them all. What remedy can we apply to this state of things?"

"Gambling is inherent in human nature. We must treat it as we do the rain—let it rain, and catch all we can with gutters that fill our water-butts against a time of drought."

"You are a clever fellow, not troubled with scruples. Let all these worthy people at liberty. Roublardas!"

"Your highness?"

"Bring the backgammon board. I feel just now in the mind for a game."

Moral.—It's little use forbidding what you can't prevent.

The Almanach Astrologique, Scientifique, Astronomique, Physique, Satirique,

and Anecdotique, has ceased to stake its reputation on astrology, and fills its pages with facts and narratives more in accordance with the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, it gives a few predictions for 1873, whose realisation my readers may be curious to verify.

For New Year's Day, a confectioner will invent an execrable bonbon. Everybody will buy a box, for the purpose of disgusting their numerous friends who exact annual presents of bonbons. The confectioner will make his fortune in four days and a half.

Seven thousand eight hundred and sixty-three inventors will send in reports to the Académie des Sciences on the direction of balloons, which they profess to have discovered. A married man thinks they would be better employed in directing their wives in the way they should go.

Mademoiselle Estelle, a petite dame residing in the Quartier Breda, will love a young gentleman for his own proper sake. After death (brought on by lobster salad), the doctors, at the post-mortem, will discover, to the great surprise of the rest of the Quartier Breda, that she actually had a heart.

Discovery of a marvellous tenor with a heavenly voice, who will require no salary from the manager who engages him. Only the said manager will have to board and lodge him, pay his tailors' bills, keep him a carriage, find him in pocket money, and present him with twenty thousand francs per month.

Racing will improve the breed of horses to such a pitch, that they will strike and refuse to drag omnibuses, so that we shall have to employ teams of donkeys instead.

Schoolboys will come home for the holidays, without requiring the slightest persuasion.

A philosopher will discover a powerful elixir of youth. His wife, aged fifty, takes too strong a dose, which brings her back to her babyhood. The philosopher is sadly put out by the circumstance, because it compels him to hire a nursemaid.

An Auvergnat will ask to be naturalised a Frenchman. When they tell him he is so by right of birth, he is astonished to learn that Auvergne is in France.

Schoolboys will require a deal of persuasion to go back to school after the holidays.

A cookmaid will win the Crédit Foncier prize of a hundred thousand francs. In spite of this great change of fortune, the good creature will consent to stay with her em-

ployers, on condition that they do all the cooking and housework, and that she dine with them at their table every day.

When roast chestnuts come into season, a gentleman will ask his wife whether she would like two sous' worth to keep her warm. Her anticipated answer is, "I should much prefer a Cashmere shawl."

In the *Almanach Amusant* I find that, when a pint bottle of very old wine was set before a connoisseur, after tasting, he was asked what he thought of it: "I think it is very small for its age."

A lady showed her own photograph and her husband's to a friend, and received the comment:

"Your husband's is a better likeness than yours."

"Yes, my dear. But then, you know, men are so very easy to catch."

In discussing the nationality of the different letters of the alphabet, we are gravely informed that T comes from China.

Fun is pleasant to cheer these dreary, drenching days, while we hear "the rain and wind beat dark December." A little practical good sense, in the midst of the mirth, like the violet shadow of a cloud spotting a glittering summer sea, is hailed as even pleasanter and more welcome still. I cannot, therefore, push aside my peckful of almanacks without a civil word for the *Almanach des Jeunes Mères et des Nourrices*—the Young Mother's and Nurses' Almanack, for 1873 (first year), published by the Lyons Infants' Protection Society. Text by Doctors Brochard, Rodet, Fonteret, Bouchacourt, and others; with pleasing and appropriate woodcuts. Price above the average, namely, seventy-five centimes, sevenpence-halfpenny.

Was it wanted—a Young Mothers' Almanack—in France? "During the long years of my medical career," writes Doctor Brochard, "I have ceaselessly combatted the prejudices of nurses, ceaselessly taught young mothers the hygiene of early infancy. My counsels were forgotten as soon as given; they went in at one ear, and out at the other. 'Better,' I said to myself, 'to put those counsels on paper. They would be read; perhaps they would be remembered. But how shall I publish them in print? The women of the present day read nothing but journals and romances.'

"There exists, nevertheless, a little book which every woman consults, which penetrates everywhere, which finds its way into the château and the cottage, and is ad-

mitted into the attic as well as the boudoir. The almanack is everywhere indispensable. Why not, then, make an almanack which shall teach mothers of families the duties of which they are ignorant? Instead of sensational criminal trials, and stories which corrupt or pervert the intelligence, young wives will find serious advice on the mode of rearing their infants, the precautions to be taken to preserve them from disease, the efficaciousness of vaccination and revaccination, and other points of the highest importance.

"To encourage the suckling of infants by their mothers, and to teach young mothers how to do so with safety; to reveal to parents the dangers incurred by babes confided to mercenary nurses; to impress on nurses that the child of the poor man has an equal right to life with the child of the rich man; that the cradle of the foundling, like that of the nursing, should be surrounded by love and solicitude; to teach them that they are under the surveillance of Infants' Protection Societies, who have the means of punishing or rewarding them—such is the object of this almanack, dedicated to mothers of families.

"By spreading this class of information, the abuses and dangers of the nursing trade will gradually disappear, and one hundred thousand infants who, in France, annually fall victims to mercenary suckling, will be spared to their families and to the nation. Thus will disappear two social plagues which, for long years past, have been the ruin of France—demoralisation and depopulation." *Ainsi soit il!*

The northern nations, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Scotland, lose scarcely more than a tenth of their infants in the course of the first year. France, enjoying a milder climate and possessed of incomparably greater resources, loses nearly the fifth. There are even regions in France in which the mortality is still greater; and it has been calculated that, within the last hundred years, more than seventeen millions of infants have perished before completing their first year, one-half of whom would have survived if they had only been treated with fair attention. Is a Young Mothers' Almanack uncalled for there? Have we no need of one at home?

Space forbids more than a reference to the chapters on Baby's Breakfast, Baby's Toilette, and Baby's Promenade; at the same time venturing the opinion that mothers who can read French, will make a good investment by the purchase of *D'Almanach des Jeunes Mères*. For those who

cannot, it might answer to publish something of the kind in English, equally pleasing, good, and cheap.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER I. THE GARDINERS.

A DINNER-PARTY was being given at one of the great houses at Brickford, and the ladies had just come up, leaving the gentlemen to "their wine below"—a phrase always used with a certain state and smacking of lips, as though the gentlemen were doing something ennobling. "*Their wine*" too, is curious, as though it belonged to them before, as well as after, assimilation.

Brickford is a new, but rising manufacturing town, blushing scarlet in the healthy bloom of its cheeks; its freshly turned clay being newly baked into long lines of houses. The villas and substantial suburban houses of the gentry, are, of course, disguised in grey plaster paletots, and furnished in a stately fashion, but there has been hard work with "the grounds," which could only be coaxed into what seemed a well-worn green tablecloth, fringed round with some stubbly tufts and bunches. The fine brick clay would break out even in the flower-beds, and the gravel on the walks is mixed with broken scraps of the same material. Brickford seems sometimes impatient under these refinements, but is thoroughly at home when it is allowed to furnish its real native produce, vast red masses of factory, and the true scarlet oak of the place, the huge chimney.

The house in which the dinner-party was given was that of Mr. William Gardiner, who had been a barrister in fair practice, and was now a county-court judge. The band of ladies sitting in the drawing-room, pursuing whatever Elensinian mysteries are carried on at that mystic season, was composed of the following elements:

Mrs. William Gardiner, hostess, a sharp, restless lady, who had once been piquante, and was furnished with a number of soothing and conciliatory devices—a very worldly person under an air of almost girlish rusticity. Her daughter Fanny, playfully called "Fancy," a pale and delicate-looking girl, seemed to be all affection and impulse, was interested to the full in anything interesting that was told to her, and amused to the same extravagant degree at anything amusing. The great lady on the sofa—the commander-in-

chief of the party—was Lady Duke, wife of Sir George Duke, a K.C.B. connexion of the Gardiner's; while beside her was Mrs. John Gardiner, a parson's wife, a rosy, good-natured, and rustic lady, who had left her seven children in bed at home. "Gardiner, the clergyman" as he was usually called, was vicar of Saint Jude's, the new and most important church of the place; a temple that seemed all roof, like a chalet, and whose walls were piebald as it were, being dappled with innumerable coloured bricks. The Gardiners William and John, were cousins, and the two families were known to be on the most affectionate terms, evidence of which was a standing arrangement that they should dine with each other alternately every Sunday. Often of an afternoon, when the day's work was done, the two cousins were seen trudging out for what they called "a constitutional" among the salubrious brick-kilns and gravel-pits which made up the unvarying suburbs of Brickford.

Billy Gardiner was a strongly-built, hearty, honest-looking fellow, with a laugh that cleared the air, and which in a May Fair drawing-room would have disturbed genteel nerves, and have been fairly christened a "horse" one. The clergyman was a short and reserved person, with a black beard and moustache, and wearing spectacles, which he was always steadying delicately with his thumb and little finger. He was a quiet soul, had a good deal of what is called dry humour, and was a great admirer of his cousin's hearty joviality and boisterous enjoyment of life. William Gardiner knew everybody, dined everywhere, and had every one to dine with him. And no officer, or official, or person of rank could pass by, or come within ken of his court, without Billy Gardiner's getting up a dinner in his honour. There, over his good wines and good cookery, his merry laugh and hearty stories entertained the guests. These stories were not of the reminiscent class, "I recollect when I was at," &c.; but of that more piquant sort, which are fresh and fresh like Devonshire cream or rolls, whose date is that of either to-day or yesterday, and the figures in which are walking about and known to us all. William Gardiner led off usually with a "Did you hear what happened to the 'doctor, yesterday?'"—a boisterous roar of enjoyment, as it were giving a local colour to the scene, and calling up smiles of anticipatory relish in the faces of the listeners. He had a positive art of falling in with these sort of things, a fortune, indeed, given to most, though they

have not the art of observing or stringing them for future use.

William Gardiner's entertainments, of the handsomest kind, and at which very good company assisted, often caused discussion, or, at least, wonder; for he had but moderate private means in addition to his judgeship. It was calculated by the social actuaries of the place, old maids, dowagers, and others, that Mr. William Gardiner could not, on the fairest computation, have more than fourteen hundred a year; "and how the deuce" — (this strengthener, of course, came from a male actuary)—"and how the deuce was a man to keep a carriage, give state dinners once a week or so, and dress that girl of his on such an income?" An appeal to the same strengthener was, perhaps, sometimes made by honest William himself, who seemed to accomplish the feat with ease, if not with a margin for even more extended operations.

This good sort of fellow was not in the least soft, for all his coarse laughter and good humour. He was rather quick of temper, and when he felt he had been injured or unjustly treated, could show a warm resentment. He was, besides, proud and sensitive. But his affection for his quiet, bookish, and parsonic cousin was very remarkable, though he would declare that he only wanted a sailor's cutlass to go on as a pirate or bandit in a melodrama. Nor must his worship of that rather faded and artificial person, who was his daughter, be passed by. On her he absolutely doted, and on her accomplishments he spared nothing. She had some taste for singing, which the best masters at the great towns within reasonable distance were employed to develop. This young lady and her mother were sometimes a little ashamed of their William's rather plebeian merriment, especially when London people like Lady Duke, K.C.B. (for, in their estimation, it was she who really bore those letters of knighthood) were present; but both stood too much in awe of him to make any protest, and found it better to affect an enthusiasm for papa and his jokes. There are, indeed, only two courses to be adopted in such a case—wholesale repudiation or wholesale adoption. Thus the mother, whose rôle was affection to all the world, would go round:

"Did you hear darling John, to-night? Oh! he is another Sheridan, my dear. Sir George always says if he was in London he wouldn't be dining at home a single day."

But this lady's admiration, indeed, extended to all that concerned her or her

family. Everything that was theirs, or connected with them, instantly became gorgeous, golden, and beautiful in her eyes. The reader will gather a fair idea of this idiosyncrasy from a remark of hers to a little girl present on this occasion of the dinner, to whom William had presented a doll as a birthday present.

"And did Willie give you that, dear? Oh how lovely! What a beautiful little thing. You must take care of it. Willie has such taste in choosing a present."

There was nothing affected in this, for it was the lady's habit unconsciously to view all things connected with her family with partiality and admiration, and all matters not thus associated with distrust and depreciation. Was any friend or neighbour about to enjoy an advantage—as the marrying a daughter—or to obtain promotion of some kind, she could only see the inconveniences, the positive drawbacks of such a step; and if she were congratulating the parties, insensibly contrived to dwindle the event into a disadvantage rather than a blessing.

So to a friend with a pretty daughter:

"My dear poor darling Fanny! I am so sorry for her; she looks so pale and shrunk up. Absolutely not a bit on her bones!"

A description that applied with more propriety to her own darling girl. It was hard to cavil at these home truths, for they were attended with an overpowering amount of endearments, kissings, huggings, squeezings. Such was Mrs. William Gardiner, or "Lizzie Gardiner," as she was known to her friends. Of the other Mrs. Gardiner not much can be said, save that she was a good-natured soul, whose function in life seemed to be that of repairing the ravages which that fell tyrant Death made in the circle in which she moved; and possibly also of receiving the exuberant and profuse osculations, squeezings, and darlings, which were lavished on her by her devoted relative.

Thus much for the Gardiners of the two branches assembled at the dinner-party.

CHAPTER II. THE BRAHAM NAGLES.

THE dinner was given in honour of Sir George, Lady Duke (K.C.B.), and their son, young Duke, who were passing through Brickford. But they could not escape the vigilance of the Customs; for no better douanier in the matter of guests could be conceived than Billy Gardiner. He stopped them all on the frontier and made them pay him the duty of a dinner. Sir George and his lady, as we have stated,

were distant connexions of the Gardiners—she having been a Miss Gardiner—who were proud of this distinguished military connexion. She now sat enthroned, much gratified with the choice meats and wines, and pleasant dinner which had been set before her. While she was delivering judgment from the ottoman as if from a wool-sack—and indeed her law had been accepted obsequiously all through the evening—the door was thrown open, and the servant proclaimed: “Mr. and Mrs. BRAHAM NAGLE! Miss Nagle!”

These were the evening guests; who were clearly guests of an unsophisticated kind, arriving at what is a painfully awkward season, during the Eleusinian mysteries, the solemn and confidential privacy, that intervenes before the gentlemen come up. The priestesses always receive such arrivals with a mixture of pity and contempt, as persons glad to partake of the leavings after they, the priestesses, have been filled. And this is sometimes literally the case.

There was a long interval after this announcement, as though the new comers were dressing their ranks outside, or too nervous to make up their minds to enter. Then appeared a tall gentleman with a wiry and short lady hanging gracefully on his arm. Both paused a little way from the door while the gentleman looked round in an interrogative fashion. Behind them came one who clearly belonged to the same family. The great lady who was smiling in genteel wonder at the first arrivals became serious, and hoisted her glass.

The cause of this sudden show of interest was the appearance of a tall, striking-looking, stately girl, walking with a sort of haughty independence, that contrasted oddly with the deprecatory manner and general air of discomfort of those who preceded her. She was really a patrician-looking girl, in her carriage, and the very arch of her neck; her face generally brilliant, her hair thick and rich, and a look of genius in her dark eyes. Her mother, Mrs. Braham Nagle, had a curiously quaint and almost theatrical air; and her hair was in stiff old-fashioned bands, as they used to be called, and she was dressed in black silk, with a rather faded Indian scarf over her shoulders. In short, a highly attenuated woman, with that leanness and shrunkenness, on which old-fashion seems generally to attend as a species of page.

Mrs. William Gardiner came forward to greet the Braham Nagles, not without a sort of trepidation. For it seemed a service of responsibility to go forward and

meet that tall gentleman, to whose arm his wife still clung, the sinuous and smiling curves of whose face already betokened unctuous and florid eloquence. And there was yet another florid element about him—a richly flowered satin waistcoat of a grey tone.

“How do you do, Mrs. William Gardiner?” he said. “We have not detained you, I trust. But there was a difficulty—about the cabman. Could not find the house. Mr. William Gardiner is well, I trust. He has a genuine mee-ewsical instinct, I assure you. By the way——”

He took his daughter by the elbow and drew her forward.

“Let me, Mrs. William Gardiner. This is our Corinna. She is clever, and promises amazingly. Quite the Grisi, I assure you.”

Mrs. Gardiner received this handsome girl good-naturedly, and brought them all into the next room; much as a box-keeper disposes of orders who arrive early in the hindmost and second-rate seats.

Mrs. Braham Nagle, very nervous in this society, was heard complaining hysterically about “the cabman, so stupid, you know.” Corinna, seated on the sofa, surveyed the company “like a duchess,” as her father would have said. The latter repaired to the piano, surveying it curiously and critically, as though he were about to purchase it: then struck a treble chord cautiously, with his flexible mouth drawn into an O, as though he would weigh the matter cautiously before concluding the bargain. He turned over some pieces of music, shook his head as he surveyed the first, then laid it down tenderly, as though it were brittle and would make a clatter. At the next he raised his eyes with an air of pleased recognition, and proceeded to make his way through it, now nodding graciously as he came to a flowing passage, now frowning and pausing as who should wish to convey “that is a stiff bit of country for you mere tailors on horseback; but it won’t do with me.”

Being the only gentleman present, he thus conveyed the idea of being busily occupied, as if he had been engaged specially to make a careful and minute survey of the various articles connected with music, and report thereon. What might seem to confirm this view was his presently coming over on tip-toe, as it were, to Mrs. Gardiner, and saying confidentially:

“A fine instrument—bichord—a noble Collard, ma’am.”

At this moment a Babel of voices talking together, and of laughers laughing to-

gether, suddenly burst out in the next room as though a school had been suddenly discharged on a playground. Gentlemen were revealed with arms affectionately laid on each other's shoulders, and pouring into each other's ears stories of exquisite mirth, interrupted by bursts of loud laughter. Some entered surveying the ladies, with a social and almost sultanic appreciation; some with a more chastened smile; some held back near the door with a reserve that seemed almost like alarm; so curious are the different phases of this interesting condition of man, which it would perhaps be rude to describe as the sanctioned and polite inebriety of the drawing-room. And yet, compared with other periods of the day, this form of spirits must, by an impartial jury, be set down as vinous.

Loudest among the laughers was William Gardiner, who was holding the general—a placid grey moustached gentleman—by both arms, and telling him “as comic a thing as he ever heard in his whole life.” In a moment, however, Mr. Gardiner had caught sight of the tall gentleman in the next room, and had rushed to greet him.

“How are you, Nagle? Glad to see you here. Where's the wife and child; I hope you brought them?”

“My dear Mr. William Gardiner, we all availed ourselves of your kind invitation. There is Corinna—Coe-rin-nah, dear”—thus he sounded her name on occasions of state—“here is——”

“Oh, I declare!” cried William. “’Pon my word! Quite a belle!”

“Yes, she is classical. Poor Braham! whose favourite pupil and aide-de-camp I may in a manner say I was——”

“I know,” said the other. “You told me.”

“—said to me one evening—I think it was on the second day of the Festival in the Abbey—that she was like Malibrong's own child. Wonderful likeness. I can see it now.”

And Mr. Nagle closed his eyes, while his lips moved softly, no doubt as if addressing the departed songstress.

William Gardiner looked at him with an amused air.

“I noticed your music in the hall. Very kind of you to come in this unceremonious way.”

“Not at all. Delighted. I'll just fetch it up and lay it out, so there will be no loss of time.”

“My dear sir, the servant will bring it.”

While this conversation was proceeding, a tall, bright-looking, and decidedly handsome young man was going about the room chatting to this lady and to that, with that almost boyish gaiety which is so engaging a quality. He was perfectly at home, was in good spirits, and, without attempting anything funny, was making them all laugh.

“Tell me,” said Mr. Braham Nagle, snatching at the host's arm in a most mysterious way—“you could *not* tell me who that fine-looking young gentleman is, over there, sitting on the low chair?”

“Of course I could. Why, God bless me, that's a sort of cousin of ours.” Then, in a loud whisper, “Lady Duke's eldest son—a young hussar, sir.”

“Fine! Italian-looking! Something now that reminds me of Grimani, who came when we were at Brighton. He used to sing with the princesses sometimes. One of those odd women's voices, which seem a little foreign to our English ways.”

“Revolted, sir,” said William, indignantly. “By the way, we must get your handsome Miss Corinna a beau. Here, Master Duke,” he added, in one of his loud whispers, “I want to introduce you to a deuced fine girl.”

Corinna, who was adorned with a blue sash, worn from her shoulder, like the Order of the Garter, received the presentee with an unconcealed and eager delight, that showed she was a natural girl. The happy father strained over in the direction of the pair, as though there was a crowd between him and them. The spare mamma leaned round the corner to see also. As Mr. Nagle saw his Corinna smiling, while the young man made his few introductory conversational flourishes, he began to smile also, swaying to and fro, as if in paternal encouragement.

It was, indeed, going very well. It is amazing how a confidence springs up in certain cases. The gentleman might have been a husband returned from a voyage, and relating his adventures. The young lady was as interested as though she had been an anxious wife.

On the 16th of December will be published the
**EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER FOR
CHRISTMAS, 1872,**

ENTITLED

DOOM'S DAY CAMP.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 212. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1872.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KNY."

CHAPTER XXIX. MY BOUQUET.

I REMEMBER so vividly the night of my first ball. The excitement of the toilet; mamma's and the maid's consultations and debates; the tremulous anticipations; the "pleasing terror;" the delightful, anxious flutter, and my final look in the tall glass. I hardly knew myself. I gazed at myself with the irrepressible smile of elation. I never had looked so well. There are degrees of that delightful excitement that calls such tints to girlish cheeks, and such fires to the eyes as visit them no more in our wiser after-life. The enchantment wanes, and the flowers and brilliants fade, and we soon cease to see them.

I went down to the drawing-room to wait for mamma. The candles were lighted, and whom should I find there but Mr. Carmel.

"I asked your mamma's leave to come and see you dressed for your first ball," he said. "How very pretty it all is."

He surveyed me, smiling with a melancholy pride it seemed to me, in my good looks, and brilliant dress.

"No longer, and never more, the Miss Ethel of my quiet Malory recollections. Going out at last! If any one can survive the ordeal and come forth scathless, you, I think, will. But to me it seems that this is a farewell, and that my pupil dies to-night, and a new Miss Ethel returns. You cannot help it; all the world cannot prevent it, if so it is to be. As an old friend I knew I might bring you these."

"Oh, Mr. Carmel, what beautiful flowers!" I exclaimed.

It was certainly an exquisite bouquet;

one of those beautiful and costly offerings that perish in an hour, and seem to me like the pearl thrown into the cup of wine.

"I am so grateful. It was so kind of you. It is too splendid a great deal. It is quite impossible that there can be anything like it in the room."

I was really lost in wonder and admiration, and I suppose looked delighted. I was pleased that my flowers should have come from Mr. Carmel's hand.

"If you think that the flowers are worthy of you, you think more highly than I do of them," he answered, with a smile that was at once sad and pleased. "I am such an old friend, you know; a month at quiet Malory counts for a year anywhere else. And as you say of the flowers, I may say more justly of my pupil, there will be no one like her there. It is the compensation of being such as I, that we may speak frankly, like good old women, and no one be offended. And, oh, Miss Ethel, may God grant they be not placed like flowers upon a sacrifice or on the dead. Do not forget your better thoughts. You are entering scenes of illusion, where there is little charity, and almost no sincerity, where cruel feelings are instilled, the love of flattery and dominion awakened, and all the evil and enchantments of the world beset you. Encourage those good thoughts; watch and pray, or a painless and even pleasant death sets in, and no one can arrest it."

How my poor father would have laughed at such an exhortation at the threshold of a ball-room. No doubt it had its comic side, but not for me, and that was all Mr. Carmel cared for.

This was a ball at an official residence, and beside the usual muster, cabinet and other ministers would be there, and above

all, that judicious rewarder of public virtue, and instructor of the conscience of the hustings, the patronage secretary of the Treasury. Papa had at last discovered a constituency, which he thought promised success, and he made it a point, of course, to go to places where he had opportunities for a talk with that important personage. Papa was very sanguine, and now, as usual, whenever he had a project of that kind on hand, was in high spirits.

He came into the drawing-room.

He always seemed to me as if he did not quite know whether he liked or disliked Mr. Carmel. Whenever I saw them together he appeared to me, like Mrs. Malaprop, to begin with a little aversion, and gradually to become more and more genial. He greeted Mr. Carmel a little coldly, and brightened as he looked on me; he was evidently pleased with me, and talked me over with myself very good-humouredly. I took care to show him my flowers. He could not help admiring them.

"These are the best flowers I have seen anywhere. How did you contrive to get them? Really, Mr. Carmel, you are a great deal too kind. I hope Ethel thanked you. Ethel, you ought really to tell Mr. Carmel how very much obliged you are."

"Oh, she has thanked me a great deal too much; she has made me quite ashamed," said he.

And so we talked on, waiting for mamma, and I remember papa said he wondered how Mr. Carmel, who had lived in London and at Oxford, and at other places, where in one kind of life or another one really does live, contrived to exist month after month at Malory, and he drew an amusing and cruel picture of its barbarism and the nakedness of the town of Cardyllion. Mr. Carmel took up the cudgels for both; and I threw in a word wherever I had one to say. I remember this laughing debate, because it led to this little bit of dialogue.

"I fortunately never bought many things there; two brushes, I remember; all their hairs fell out, and they were bald before the combs they sent for to London arrived. If I had been dependent on the town of Cardyllion, I should have been reduced to a state of utter simplicity."

"Oh, but I assure you, papa, they have a great many very nice things at Jones's shop in Castle-street," I remonstrated.

"Certainly not for one's dressing-room. There are tubs at the regatta, and sponges at their dinners, I dare say," papa began in a punning vein.

"But you'll admit that London supplies no such cosmetics as Malory," said Mr. Carmel, with a kind glance at me.

"Well, you have me there, I admit," laughed papa, looking very pleasantly at me, who, no doubt, was at that moment the centre of many wild hopes of his.

Mamma came down now; there was no time to lose. My heart bounded, half with fear. Mr. Carmel came down-stairs with us, and saw us into the carriage.

He stood at the door-steps smiling, his short cloak wrapped about him, his hat in his hand. Now the horses made their clattering scramble forward; the carriage was in motion. Mr. Carmel's figure, in the attitude of his last look, receded; he was gone; it was like a farewell to Malory, and we were rolling on swiftly toward the ball-room, and a new life for me.

I am not going to describe this particular ball, nor my sensations on entering this new world, so artificial and astonishing. What an arduous life, with its stupendous excitement, fatigues, and publicity!

There were in the new world on which I was entering, of course, personal affections and friendships as among all other societies of human beings. But the canons on which it governs itself are, it seemed to me, inimical to both. The heart gives little, and requires little there. It assumes nothing deeper than relations of acquaintance; and there is no time to bestow on any other. It is the recognised business of every one to enjoy, and if people have pains or misfortunes they had best keep them quite to themselves, and smile. No one has a right to be ailing or unfortunate, much less to talk as if he were so, in that happy valley. Such people are "tainted wethers of the flock," and are bound to abolish themselves forthwith. No doubt kind things are done, and charitable, by people who live in it. But they are no more intended to see the light of that life, than Mr. Snake's good-natured actions were. This dazzling microcosm, therefore, must not be expected to do that which it never undertook. Its exertions in pursuit of pleasure are enormous; its exhaustion prodigious; the necessary restorative cycle must not be interrupted by private agonies, small or great. If that were permitted, who could recruit for his daily task? I am relating, after an interval of very many years, the impressions of a person who, then very young, was a denizen of "the world" only for a short time; but

the application of these principles of selfishness seemed to me sometimes ghastly.

One thing that struck me very much in a little time was, that society, as it is termed, was so limited in numbers. You might go everywhere, it seemed to me, and see, as nearly as possible, the same people night after night. The same cards always, merely shuffled. This, considering the size and wealth of England and of London, did seem to me unaccountable.

My first season, like that of every girl who is admired and danced with a great deal, was glorified by illusions, chief among which was that the men who danced with me as often as they could every night did honestly adore me. We learn afterwards how much and how little those triumphs mean; that new faces are liked simply because they are new; and that girls are danced with because they are the fashion and dance well. I am not boasting; I was admired; and papa was in high good humour and spirits. There is sunshine even in that region; like winter suns, bright but cold. Such as it is, let the birds of that enchanted forest enjoy it while it lasts; flutter their wings and sing in its sheen, for it may not be for long.

CHAPTER XXX. THE KNIGHT OF THE BLACK CASTLE.

My readings with Mr. Carmel totally ceased; in fact, there was no time for any but that one worship which now absorbed me altogether.

Every now and then, however, he was in London, and mamma, in the drawing-room, used at times to converse with him, in so low a tone, so earnestly and so long, that I used to half suspect her of making a shrift, and receiving a whispered absolution. Mamma, indeed, stood as it were with just one foot upon the very topmost point of the spire of our "high church" ready to spread her wings, and float to the still more exalted level of the cross on the dome of St. Peter's. But she always hesitated when the moment for making the aerial ascent arrived, and was still trembling in her old attitude on her old pedestal.

I don't think mamma's theological vagaries troubled papa. Upon all such matters he talked like a good-natured Sadducee; and if religion could have been carried on without priests, I don't think he would have objected to any of its many forms.

Mamma had Mr. Carmel to luncheon often, during his stay in town. Whenever he could find an opportunity, he talked

with me. He struggled hard to maintain his hold upon me. Mamma seemed pleased that he should; yet I don't think that she had made up her mind even upon my case. I dare say, had I then declared myself a "Catholic," she would have been in hysterics.

Her own religious state, just then, I could not perfectly understand. I don't think she did. She was very uncomfortable about once a fortnight. Her tremors returned when a cold or any other accident had given her a dull day.

When the season was over, I went with papa and mamma to some country houses, and while they completed their circuit of visits Miss Pouncen I and were detached to Malory.

The new world which had dazzled me for a time, had not changed me. I had acquired a second self; but my old self was still living. It had not touched my heart, nor changed my simple tastes. I enjoyed the quiet of Malory, and its rural ways, and should have been as happy there as ever, if I could only have recovered the beloved companions whom I missed.

My loneliness was very agreeably relieved one day as I was walking home from Penruthyn Priory by meeting Mr. Carmel.

He joined me, and we sauntered toward home in very friendly talk. He was to make a little stay at the steward's house. We agreed to read *I Promessi Sposi* together. Malory was recovering its old looks.

I asked him all the news that he was likely to know and I cared to hear. "Where was Lady Lorrimer?" I inquired.

Travelling, he told me, on the Continent, he could not say where. "We must not talk of her," he said, with a shrug and a laugh. "I think, Miss Ware, we were never so near quarrelling upon any subject as upon Lady Lorrimer, and I then resolved never again to approach that irritating topic."

So, with mutual consent we talked of other things, among which I asked him:

"Do you remember Mr. Marston?"

"You mean the shipwrecked man who was quartered for some days at the steward's house?" he asked. "Yes—I remember him very well." He seemed to grow rather pale as he looked at me, and added, "Why do you ask?"

"Because," I answered, "you told me that he was in good society, and I have not seen him anywhere—not once."

"He was in society; but he's not in London, nor in England now, I believe. I

once knew him pretty well, and I know only too much of him. I know him for a villain; and had he been still in England I should have warned you again, Miss Ethel, and warned your mamma also, against permitting him to claim your acquaintance; but I don't think he will be seen again in this part of the world. Not, at all events, until after the death of a person who is likely to live a long time."

"But what has he done?" I asked.

"I can't tell you—I can't tell you how cruelly he has wounded me," he answered. "I have told you in substance all I know, when I say he is a villain."

"I do believe, Mr. Carmel, your mission on earth is to mortify my curiosity. You won't tell me anything of any one I'm the least curious to hear about."

"He is a person I hate to talk of, or even to think of. He is a villain—he is incorrigible—and happen what may, a villain, I think, he will be to the end."

I was obliged to be satisfied with this, for I had learned that it was a mere waste of time trying to extract from Mr. Carmel any secret which he chose to keep.

Here then, in the old scenes, our quiet life began for awhile once more.

I did not see more of Mr. Carmel now than formerly, and there continued the slightly altered tone, in talk and manner, which had secretly so sorely vexed me in town, and which at times I almost ascribed to my fancy.

Mr. Carmel's stay at Malory was desultory, too, as before; he was often absent for two or three days together.

During one of these short absences, there occurred a very trifling incident, which, however, I must mention.

The castle of Cardyllion is a vast ruin, a military fortress of the feudal times, built on a great scale, and with prodigious strength. Its ponderous walls and towers are covered thick with ivy. It is so vast that the few visitors who are to be found there when the summer is over, hardly disquiet its wide solitudes and its silence. For a time I induced Miss Pouden to come down there nearly every afternoon, and we used to bring our novels, and she, sometimes, her work; and we sat in the old castle, feeling, in the quiet autumn, as if we had it all to ourselves. The inner court is nearly two hundred feet square; and, ascending a circular stair in the angle next the great gate, you find yourself at the end of a very dark stone-floored corridor running the entire length of the building.

This long passage is lighted at intervals by narrow loop-holes placed at the left; and in the wall to the right, after having passed several doors, you come, about midway, to one admitting to the chapel.

It is a small stone-floored chamber, with a lofty groined roof, very gracefully proportioned; a tall stone-shafted window admits a scanty light from the east, over the site of the dismantled altar; deep shadow prevails everywhere else in this pretty chapel, which is so dark in most parts, that in order to read or work, one must get directly under the streak of light that enters through the window, necessarily so narrow as not to compromise the jealous rules of mediæval fortification. A small arch, at each side of the door, opens a view of this chamber, from two small rooms, or galleries, reached by steps from this corridor.

We had placed our camp-stools nearly under this window, and were both reading; when I raised my eyes they encountered those of a very remarkable-looking old man, whom I instantly recognised, with a start. It was the man whom we used, long ago, to call the Knight of the Black Castle. His well-formed, bronzed face and features were little changed, except for those lines that time deepens or produces. His dark fierce eyes were not dimmed by the years that had passed; but his long black hair, which was uncovered, as tall men in those low passages were obliged to remove their hats, was streaked now with grey. This stern old man was gazing fixedly on me, from the arch beside the door, to my left, as I looked at him; and he did not remove his eyes as mine met his. Sullen, gloomy, stern was the face that remained inflexibly fixed in the deep shadow which enhanced its pallor.

I turned with an effort to my companion, and said, "Suppose we come out, and take a turn in the grounds."

To which, as indeed to everything I proposed, Miss Pouden assented.

I walked for a minute or two about the chapel before I stole a glance backward at the place where I had seen the apparition. He was gone. The arch, and the void space behind, were all that remained; there was nothing but deep shadow where that face had loomed.

I asked Miss Pouden if she had seen the old man looking in; she had not.

Well, we left the chapel, and retraced our steps through the long corridor, I watching through the successive loop-holes

for the figure of the old man pacing the grass beneath. But I did not see him. Down the stairs we came, I peeping into every narrow doorway we passed, and so out upon the grassy level of the inner court. I looked in all directions there, but nowhere could I see him. Under the arched gateway, where the portcullis used to clang, we passed into the outer court, and there I peeped about, also, in vain.

I dare say Miss Pouden, if she could wonder at anything, wondered what I could be in pursuit of: but that most convenient of women never troubled me with a question.

Through the outer gate, in turn, we passed, and to Richard Pritchard's lodge, at the side of the gate admitting visitors from Castle-street to the castle grounds.

Tall Richard Pritchard, with his thin stoop, his wide-awake hat, brown face, lantern jaws, and perpetual smirk, listened to my questions, and answered that he had let in such a gentleman, about ten minutes before, as I described. This gentleman had given his horse to hold to a donkey-boy outside the gate, and Richard Pritchard went on to say, with his usual volubility, and his curious interpolation of phrases of politeness, without the slightest regard to their connexion with the context, but simply to heighten the amiability and polish of his discourse:

"And he asked a deal, miss, about the family down at Malory, I beg your pardon; and when he heard you were there, miss, he asked if you ever came down to the town; yes, indeed; so when I told him that you were in the castle now; very well, I thank you, miss; he asked whereabout in the castle you were likely to be; yes, indeed, miss; very true; and he gave me a shilling; he did, indeed; and I showed him the way to the chapel, I beg your pardon, miss, where you very often go; very true, indeed, miss; and so I left him at the top of the stairs. Ah, ha! yes, indeed, miss; and he came back just two or three minutes; and took his horse and rode down toward the water-gate; very well, I thank you, miss."

This was the substance of Richard Pritchard's information.

So, then, he had ridden down Castle-street and out of the town. It was odd his caring to have that look at me. What could he mean by it? His was a countenance ominous of nothing good. After so long an interval it was not pleasant to see it again, especially associated with

inquiries about Malory and its owners, and the sinister attraction which had drawn him to the chapel to gaze upon me; and as I plainly perceived, by no means with eyes of liking. The years that had immediately followed his last visit, I knew had proved years of great loss and peril to papa. May Heaven avert the omen! I silently prayed.

I knew that old Rebecca Torkill could not help to identify him, for I had been curious on the point before; she could not bring to her recollection the particular scene that had so fixed itself upon my memory; for, as she said, in those evil years, there was hardly a day that did not bring down some bawling creditor from London to Malory in search of papa.

A PRIME SCOT.

MORITURUS vos saluto! To-morrow morning the pole-axe will sink into my forehead; the day after, my prime joints will be exhibited in all the toothsome streaky splendour of fat and lean in the shop of that fortunate West-end butcher who "clapped hands" for me at the Great Christmas Cattle Market. It is my fate to be eaten, but no vulgar tooth shall masticate my firm yet succulent tissues; indeed, I have reason to believe that I am all bespoken already. I die happy, my mission and my ambition have been fulfilled. My worst enemy, if I have one, cannot but say, in the language of Peter Allardyce, that "I fill a string well." With three comrades, I had the proud position of topping the Christmas Cattle Market; in the racy language of the lamented John Benzie, I am "beef to the root of the lug," and I have a well-grounded conviction that I shall "die well" in the sense in which butchers use the term. True, the immortality of being exhibited at the Great Smithfield Club Show has been denied me owing to an unfortunate congenital lack of perfection in the region of the hook bones and a trifling defect of symmetry behind the shoulder; but as a rational ox I cannot grumble at the decree of fate, and it is something, surely, to have topped the Great Christmas Cattle Market. It has not been without willing exertions on my part, and incessant attention on the part of those who have had the charge of me from calf-hood till the day I left my home "prime fat," that this distinction has been achieved. I have my reward in the proud consciousness of that distinction, while my breeder

and feeder has his in the long price that was given for me without a murmur.

I am a three-year-old. I was born at Tillyfour, the abiding place of the "powerful, pushing, and prosperous race" of M'Combie. In my veins runs the best blood of the breed to which I belong, the black polled Aberdeenshire. My genealogy goes back to the famous old Queen Mother, the corner-stone of the Tillyfour fortunes in the polls; it includes Hauton, the hero of nine first prizes, from Alford to Poissy, where not even the long purse of the French emperor could buy him; Charlotte, who stood first at Poissy, among the cows, as Hauton did among the bulls; the gigantic Black Prince; the beautiful daughter of Zarah—

None half so fragrant, half so fair
As Kate of Aberdeen;

the "Poissy ox," whom the French emperor's butcher bought for eighty-four pounds, after he had won two hundred and eighty-five pounds in money and cups; the Smithfield Cup winner of '63, of whom Mr. M'Combie observed that, "a little man would not be able to see him without assistance;" Rifleman, Lola Montes, and many another known to the herd-book, to the show-yard, and to fame.

My destiny to die fat was fixed from the very hour of my birth, and that I should fulfil my destiny, a settled scheme—the result of long experience and intelligent observation—was sedulously pursued. There are calves, as there are children, that never know the tender cares of a mother, but that take their early nutriment from a pail, as hand-reared children take theirs from a bottle. I was no pail-suckling; my owner's motto was "the sure way to make first-class calves is to allow them to suckle." A day or two after I was born I was muzzled, to prevent me from gorging my tender and infantine stomach with a surfeit of that rich fluid which my mother yielded so copiously. The muzzle was taken off three times a day by a trustworthy person, against whom I began to conceive an antipathy, owing to the stern relentlessness with which he replaced it after I had been imbibing, for what seemed to me a cruelly limited space of time. But the reduction was meant for my good; and about the fourteenth day, when kind nature made me a present of the accomplishment of chewing the cud, the muzzle was removed altogether, and I was free to suck at pleasure. When the pleasant spring days came, and the leaves began to burst

on the birches down in the Glen of Tillyriach, my mother, with myself at her feet, was turned out to grass on the rich hundred acres of the Nether Hill. Those were happy times. While our dams placidly browsed, or lay chewing the cud under the shadow of the clumps of wood, we calves used to caper about among the mole-hills, and chevy one another merrily round the trunks of the larches. But I never allowed myself even momentarily to forget the first duty of a right-minded Tillyfour poll—the duty of feeding well, conscientiously with a view to the happy consummation of dying fat. My mother was an animal of very high principle, and was continually inculcating upon me the duty of so living, that I might die worthy of my race. Of the plump calf-flesh on my frame, she, with her copious fecundity of rich milk would take care until the time came for our separation, but after that my fate would be in my own hands. "Never lose your calf-flesh, my dear," she was wont to say; "if you do, you resign the possibility of dying prime fat. By high feeding, as you get older, you may acquire a great deal of tallow internally, but you will never become an animal to be prized by the great retail butcher." My present position proves that those early lessons have not been lost upon me; I was a fat calf, thanks to my mother, and I never lost the fat of calf-hood.

In the month of October, when I was about eight months old, I was weaned. I felt the loss of mother's milk considerably for a few days, and even feared that I might lose flesh. Shortly before I was taken from my mother, however, I had been allowed a pound of oil-cake a day, and since now that I had no milk, this allowance was increased to two pounds, I soon felt that I was safe. With a number of companions of the same age I spent my first winter very happily in an open straw-yard, one half of which was covered in for shelter. Our beds were always warm and dry, our food turnips and straw (with the two pounds of oil-cake of which I have spoken), always plentiful and regularly served. I grew very much during that winter, owing to those advantages, and to my making a conscientious use of them. The first winter is always the most critical period with us. If starved or neglected, we become "set" or stunted; the growth stops and is very difficult to set agoing again, and there exists great liability to such disorders as "blackleg" and "knee-ill." But we Tillyfour calves, well fed and

well cared for, continued to grow steadily and rapidly, and when, as yearlings, we were ready for the grass in the spring, we looked to the full as big and as "furnished" as the two-year-olds of less enlightened and judicious cattle feeders.

The whole of my second summer I spent with my fellows on good pasture, and the following winter passed as did the first, only that we received no allowance of oil-cake, but lived wholly on turnips and straw. There was no stint to our allowance of turnips, and when the time came to go out on the grass again, I was in high condition, what is known as nearly "half-fat." But it must be understood that my condition was perfectly natural; the result of continuous good living; I had been in no degree forced. While it pays to keep a young beast steadily progressing, to force it, if intended for commercial purposes, is the most unprofitable policy conceivable. When a forced two-year-old is turned out to grass, he positively goes back instead of improving for the first three months, so that the owner loses his grass without increasing his beef, a method of procedure which cannot aid materially in paying the rent. We were out on the grass—it was new grass—quite early in the season; it was, I think, the first week of May. I once heard Mr. M'Combie remark that "Cattle never forget an early bite of new grass," and my personal experience goes to prove the truth of the observation. I gained nearly a third in weight in the first five weeks I was on the grass. We were housed at night till the warm weather set in, and shifted from park to park on to the best of the grass, for we had now attained an age and a stage in fattening that constituted us of the first importance.

It was on the 1st of August last that my fate was finally determined. Till that day I had nourished hopes of the show-yard. In point of fact, in the course of the previous winter I had been tied up for a short time in anticipation of a local show, but had not been sent forward, owing to a slight indisposition which temporarily interfered with my bloom. I knew where were my weak points, but I had a modest confidence that they might be counterbalanced by my general trueness of shape, high-bred aspect, and kindliness as a feeder. Mr. M'Combie, a friend, and his bailiff came into our field, and scanned us closely one after another. The bailiff was strongly in my favour as an eligible show ox, and grew quite clo-

quent as to the effect another year and sedulous forcing would produce on me. But that awkward wideness in the hook bones proved my bane. "I detest to see huik banes too wide apart," quoth Mr. M'Combie emphatically; and my heart fell within me. "He's a good commercial beast," continued Tillyfour; "take him up for the Christmas market. He'll do us credit there."

It was not for me to grumble, but to give myself wholly to the laying on of fat, so as to make good the words of Tillyfour. With about fifty others, all of whom stood with me the other day at "the top of the market" by the round tower in Copenhagen Fields, I was taken up from grass next day; and the work was begun of getting ripe in earnest for the London Christmas Cattle Market. At first—while the weather remained warm—we stood loose in the straw-yards, and lived on fresh clover, mixed with three parts ripe tares sown with a third of white peas and a third of oats. This succulent mixture laid on fat rapidly, and kept up our bloom, so that we throve right well. In early October, when the days began to draw in, we were tied up and put into the stalls. After so many months of freedom, the confinement was irksome for a day or two, and one or two of my more fractious companions were inclined to rebel against it, and had to be watched continually. But I always had a contented mind, and never lost sight of the purpose of my being. When we were stalled our food was changed gradually to yellow Aberdeen turnips, which we got fresh and clean direct from the fields. There was no allow-ancing; we all had as many as we could consume. We were "our own turnip slicers," for Mr. M'Combie holds that half the sap is wasted by the modern system of slicing turnips in a machine. The shed-dings in which we stood were kept dark-ened to aid quiet digestion and repose; we were never loosened from the stall, but watered and fed where we stood. Between the morning and the mid-day meal, the brush and currycomb were actively employed on our hides; and it was not well for the cattlemen when Tillyfour, as he made his rounds wrapped in his shaggy plaid, noticed dust on any of our coats.

Our turnip fare was gradually introduced. We only got a few at first, along with the tares and the clover, and the quantity was increased daily till in from ten to fourteen days we were on a full

supply. About the middle of October our fare was changed from yellow Aberdeens to Swedish turnips. It was not until the last week of October that we began on the oil-cake, and at first we had only two pounds of it a day. One might imagine that as we were due in London about the 12th of December for the Christmas Cattle Market, to commence giving us oil-cake so late was a parsimonious mistake. If we had been feeding in Norfolk or in the stalls of Tiptree Hall, we should, no doubt, have been on cake much longer, to say nothing of oats and barley, peas, beans, and patent cattle food; but Tillyfour holds that it cannot pay, and is unnecessary besides, to give fat cattle cake and corn longer than six weeks before they come to market. "For commercial cattle and for commercial purposes," I have heard him say, "two months is the utmost limit that cake and corn will pay the Aberdeenshire feeder." Of course if I had been going to the show-yard I would have been on cake and corn, to say nothing of linseed and barley-meal, for ever so long; but I hope I do no discredit to the feeding which I have received. It was I, and not a Norfolk beast, that topped the market.

The last dip came in November. In the first week of that month the allowance of cake was increased gradually, till it reached five pounds, and we had a daily feed of bruised oats or barley in addition. I had less cake than many, having been in so good condition when tied up, but some of my leaner friends had towards the end almost any quantity of cake and corn, that they might be got ripe in time. It was Tillyfour himself who apportioned to each animal the proportion it should receive, and his instructions were sedulously obeyed by the cattle tenders. For the first three weeks after I was put on cake I improved very fast, but then for a little while it was as if I stood still, and as if the cake and corn had lost their effect. It was now that skill came into play. Some feeders would have heaped my manger till I should have had a surfeit without adding an ounce to my weight; but as soon as I was noticed at a standstill, the cake and corn were taken off for a couple of days, till, as it were, my system recovered its power of absorbing and benefiting by those stimulants to condition. Then they were recommenced, and gradually increased in quantity, till when the time came for me, with my comrades, to start for the railway at Whitehouse, I had fairly got the finishing

dip, and was as prime fat an ox as had ever left Tillyfour stading.

I confess I looked forward to the journey to London with considerable apprehension. I had had no exercise for over three months, a great part of my time when in the stall I spent lying down, and it gave me, fat, soft in the hoofs, and stiff in the legs as I was, quite a shock to have to look forward to the journey by road to Whitehouse, and to some thirty hours in the truck afterwards in a standing posture. But the foresight of my feeder stepped in to quell my forebodings. A few days before the time came for us to leave, we were turned out into a lea field. We were forced to walk about, and were kept out, nearly always in motion, for nearly four hours. When we came back again to the stall we were all very much fatigued, and we had lost a portion of our bloom. But a day's rest restored us mightily, and on the second day when turned out again we bore the exercise with much greater freshness. We had a third day of exercise, and the day before our departure was spent in rest. When at length we bade a final adieu to Tillyfour, and ponderously took the road for the station, I was quite surprised how well, thanks to the little training I had undergone, I bore the walk to Whitehouse station. There the trucks were waiting for us; we were "shipped," six beasts in a truck, and, accompanied by several experienced cattlemen from Tillyfour, we started on our long journey by rail to London. At certain intervals we were fed and watered, and when, after a journey lasting some thirty hours, we finally, late on the Saturday night, reached the cattle-platform at the Maiden-lane station, near the cattle market, we were, indeed, somewhat stiff and weary with long standing, yet by no means exhausted, and with no symptoms either of founder or paralysis. But for the preliminary exercise before leaving home, how many of us would have gone down in the trucks, is a question I shudder to contemplate.

From the Maiden-lane station we were directly driven off to the lairs that had been secured for us in the immediate neighbourhood of the cattle market, and spent a pleasant and grateful night in the midst of clean straw and plenty of food. Sunday was a day of profound and welcome rest, the only incident of which was the clipping of the initial "M.C." in the long hair on the flank of each of us. Long before dawn on the Monday morning, the morning of

the great Christmas market, we were on our way from the lairs to Mr. Gible's stances hard by the western side of the great tower in Copenhagen Fields. It was not long after daybreak when the swell butchers came thronging around us, pinching, poking, and praising, Mr. Gible, who acts as salesman for Tillyfour, said very little, but stood by with an assumption of unconcern, "We were beasts," I had heard him say, "that would sell themselves." I was sold, with three others, before nine o'clock, and, as I have said, we topped the market. Driven back to the lair, I now serenely abide there the blow of the pole-axe, conscious that I have deserved well of my country, that there is not a coarse bit of meat about me, that I shall be found to have surprisingly little offal, and that after I am gone it will lie in the mouth of no man to give me a bad name.

THE CUPBOARD PAPERS.

XII. TWELVE O'CLOCK HUNTERS.

WHAT is a twelve o'clock hunter? What is the meaning of the Rue Cherche-midi? Monsieur Barrière has, at the Gymnase, at this moment, a delightful comedy entitled *Twelve o'Clock at Fourteen o'Clock*. I suppose that twelve o'clock happens at fourteen o'clock in Rabelais' work of the four Thursdays when Pantagruel was born. The *cherche-midi* is simply a dinner hunter, who got his name in the days when everybody dined at noon; when the sign of every restaurant was a clock face, with the hands at twelve. The last of these establishments was the *Cadran Bleu*, of the Boulevard du Temple—a rendezvous of famous forks in the times of good cheer gone by. Long before the Blue Dial disappeared, dinner was at six. The hours have changed, but the twelve o'clock hunters remain, keen and hungry long after fourteen o'clock. They are of many degrees and aspects in all great cities. It has been observed that the ways of earning a leg of mutton are infinite; and so are the ways of getting within knife and fork shot of one, without having earned it. Privat d'Anglemont has written a vastly entertaining work on the Unknown Industries of Paris; but even his celebrated painter of turkeys' legs is an orthodox art workman when compared with the real artists who throw all their genius into the idea of a dinner—for nothing! The thorough *cherche-midi* performs no kind of useful work. He is a trained bird of prey; the degenerate descendant of

the illustrious Montmaur. Even the "guardian angel" is not a pure *cherche-midi*, because he does some duty. It is his business to wait at wine-shops to see the drunkards home to their lodgings; and he has a regular tariff for the duty; that is, he had. Perhaps the angels have taken wing before the ringing pick of Haussmann! So many changes have happened since I travelled through the Pays Latin, and was nearly suffocated in the camphre fumes of the *Drapeau Rouge* on Sainte Geneviève's mountain!

The dinner hunters of the present time are, as I have observed, a degenerate race. Montmaur, we are told, lived on a high point of the capital—somewhere near the Pantheon, I fancy—and observed the chimneys of all the houses, the doors of which he could command; and he opened his hunt in the direction of that chimney which gave forth the deepest and fattest rolls of smoke. The professional diners-out—the sponges—are the inartistic Montmaurs of our time. They are plentiful enough; but they are half a company when compared with the legions who rise every morning without having the least idea how they will dine that day. These legions are a threatening host in many cities that, to the holiday visitor, have an aspect of splendour, and appear to be gorged with wealth; and scores of social doctors have been planning in vain how to secure for every human stomach its due quantities of carbon and fibrin per diem.

Is it possible to bring ragged crowds of twelve o'clock hunters, who have not dined at fourteen o'clock, within rules of economy, that will make at least the mid-day meal a certainty to all? The quantities of nitrogen and carbon the poor human frame asks for daily are so small, so common, lying scattered by bountiful Nature in so many thousand forms over the face of the earth, that, in these wonder-working days of man's ingenuity, it does appear to be a sin and shame that they cannot be got within reach of every human hand.

In London few experiments—and these clumsy ones—have been tried. The English fail at the very outset. Their waste begins directly they light the fire. Their stoves are at fault. They throw heat recklessly about them. They cannot comprehend such order and centralisation as they have in Paris, where there is a *Boulangerie Centrale* for all the assisted poor of the city. The workhouses are as full of waste as they are of woe. The charities cross

and recross one another. Everything concerning the poor is slipshod, except among the English Jews; and he who has to live on fifteen shillings a week in the pitiful confusion, is a sufferer to the end of his days—the victim of the social, the economical, lawlessness of his people.

He who desires to understand thoroughly the difference there is between the poor workman of London and the poor workman of Paris, must, if he be an Englishman, make a thorough study in and round about the great central markets from which the main body of the Parisians are fed. The best approach is by the Rue Montmartre, past the Passage du Saumon (the Cranbourne-alley of Paris, where thrifty bourgeois of slender means buy bonnets at less than a third Madame Alexandrine's prices), and the wonderful comestible shops where the truffles lie in wicker cobbles; and the tubs of olives, gherkins, and capers are in rows; and the Burgundy snails are in proud pyramids. You may taste them in the market at the rate of sixty centimes the dozen, or carry them away for fifty centimes; and so popular have they become of late years that there is an idea travelling about St. Eustache that snails will shortly have a market to themselves, and be on a proud equality with oysters.

"This is a picture I am free to confess," Mr. Bloomsbury Baker observed to me one morning when I took him on a ramble to see how the fish and poultry stood that day. We had passed by one of the shops opposite St. Eustache. "Observe the cleanliness and the art; the pyramids of prepared sorrel and spinach, the disposition of the Mont d'Ors, the Pont l'Evêques, the immense Gruyères, and the delightful Suisses; the Montpellier cakes large as mushroom rings in a meadow, the glowing fungi and the stuffed snails—with the pies of Amiens, Pithiviers, Chartres, and Strasbourg for supports to the royal truffle in the place of honour."

And the people were pouring in and out; all carrying little baskets and dainties in snowy papers in their hands. As we reached the markets stretching their angles far to west and to east, and showing long lines of busy avenues tending to the south, the crowd thickened, the chattering became tumultuous and confounding, and we were carried with the stream to the opening of the Rue Pirouette.

The Rue Pirouette I will match against any other street in Paris for picturesqueness.

At the opening of it are considerable wholesale salaison dealers, cheese factors, fat and greasy provision merchants, with shop-fronts packed with endless varieties of food. The street narrows gently to a dark lane of tumble-down houses, leaning like a parcel of drunken boors one against the other; jutting out and falling in, in all kinds of unexpected places; and exhibiting at every angle, except that of order, signs and boards and inscriptions. The blackest of the houses is an hotel.

"The mind," Mr. Baker observes, "trembles at the bare imagination of what even the best bedroom in that house must be."

Next door is a friture, with a sign staggering forward into the fat Rabelaisian gloom, where there are endless potations of petit-bleu, and the black-pudding is a perpetual dainty, and four or five sous' worth of soup and beef in the traiteur's, next door to the entrepôt of snails, will make the merry tongues of the twelve o'clock hunters wag apace. I had some difficulty in persuading Mr. Baker to trust his respectability to the mercies of this merry street of greasy, unctuous squalor. There were wonderful bits of perspective to the right and left as we advanced. Long dark rooms, with figures moving in them; rows of customers at the friture, at the deal tables. Every corner a yard square was given up to a separate industry. As we turned the corner a woman in a gloomy doorway, with rows of rabbits and hares nodding just above her cap, and swinging at her elbows, was working a gorgeous pattern on an embroidery frame, while waiting for customers for puss.

"That," said Mr. Baker, "is French all over. I could kiss her."

While we were discreetly observing, an officer issued from a salaison shop—a captain of the line, epaulettes and all—with two little parcels in his gloved hand, and something depending from his finger. He had been buying a few olives, to crown his marketing. At the snail entrepôt two old crones were talking eagerly over two pipkins of soup—exchanging now and then a pleasantry with a lad in a blouse opposite, who was engaged over immense baskets of steaming spinach leaves, that were being reduced to those compact green hills that appear in the windows of traders in comestibles.

The Rue Pirouette is a lively street, as it ought to be; the dwellers and workers therein are singing, jesting, smoking, eating, and drinking; the bubbling of the fat in the pans—dulcet harmony to the cherche-

medi's ears—never ceases from before the dawn (at the Reunion des Amis you may have soup at three sous a basin from four in the morning) till far into the evening: it has a squalid, ragged, hang-dog look, but is full of good cheer and honest industry; and you might grease a wheel with its atmosphere.

"Bless me!" said Mr. Baker, as I led him past the imposing *Tripes à la mode de Caen* restaurant, and again past that kingly establishment of the market-place, inscribed *Au Père Tranquille*, to the central market halls, ringing with the shrill notes of the famous ladies who preside at the stalls. "Bless me!" cried Baker, "I am sure my cook wouldn't know the names of half the vegetables they sell here."

"Nor can your countrymen," I observed, "understand the order, the method, that reigns throughout these spacious halls; through the fish, the vegetable, the butter saloons. A broad road lies through the immense market square; and on many sides, spacious approaches have been made. All the market folk, except those who hold the chief vegetable stalls upon the pavements outside the halles, are under cover, and these tent themselves easily against bad weather. Pray remember that this is only the central provision market. Within a quarter of an hour's walk is the Saint Honoré Market—these halles in little, for the Saint Honoré quarter. Cross the water, pass the Palais de Justice, another twenty minutes, and you will light upon halles for the Parisians of the left bank. Travel half an hour further and you will see the Saint Sulpice Market; another half-hour will take you to the Sevres Market. Follow the Rue Saint Honoré to the extreme west of Paris, and you will find yourself in the Ternes Market. Batignolles has its market; every neighbourhood has one, as orderly as this. The Ternes is not a covered market; but it is as orderly as the best row of the fruit stalls here; and it is frequented by the cooks of the great houses in that neighbourhood. Now let us make the tour of the outside vegetable market.

The stalls, or sittings, are in regular lines; and the pavement is so broad that there are two or three avenues along its width; the purchasers passing easily up and down, chaffering, joking, and packing their baskets. Here and there we come upon a true lady of the halle, of powerful arm and shoulder, potent voice, and fresh, hard, staring face, with impudent or jocular sallies playing in the corners of her mouth. The vegetable women outside are, to her,

the vulgarians of the market. A stately lady sits, just within the market gates, deigning to sell piles of artichokes at one and two sous each. An old gentleman endeavours to bargain with her; but she tells him loftily they are to be taken or left at the marked prices; and he ends by putting three into the tails of a snuff-brown coat that has seen many seasons. He had a keen French face, I thought, like Voltaire's in the foyer of the Comedie Française. The endive is superb in yellow tufts, of the form and proportions of Louis Philippe's pyramidal wig. The *barbe-de-capucine*, in long golden tresses, was compared, by the gallant Baker, to naiad's tresses; then there were onions in bunches at one sou each; and then artistically bound groups of vegetables—carrots, turnips, onions, leeks, and herbs—for the *bouquet garni*, as the cook calls it. These bouquets of vegetables—which vary in price from two to five sous, according to their size—are the vegetable ingredients of the *pot-au-feu*. The *bouquet garni* is a work for the cook's own hand to perform. She takes thyme, chervil, parsley, and an onion for centre piece, in which she sticks half a dozen cloves, and—just a suspicion of garlic. This she casts into the *pot-au-feu*.

"Bless me—winter; and here are delicious spring radishes at a penny a bundle!" Mr. Baker suddenly exclaimed. Then rapping his umbrella upon the pavement, he turned sharply upon me, and added, "Will you be good enough, *Fin-Bec*, to inform me why I cannot have these at my own house this time of the year?"

"Because your market-gardeners are barbarians compared with those who cultivate the fields round Paris; and again, because when they introduce a new vegetable in Covent Garden Market, their dunder-headed customers begin by turning up their nose at it."

"These neat women, in their white aprons and caps, buying the day's vegetables—and such a supply too—you say are cooks in good houses."

"All of them; and they have the love of their profession in their hearts. The workwomen who are here too, catering for their poor households, are just as keen and knowing. You can now understand how it is you see that tempting salad every day in my porter's lodge. The mallow is a vegetable unknown to the salad makers of England; yet how delicious is its sweet, nutty flavour in the company of celery and fine fresh oil."

Mr. Baker touched me gently on the sleeve, and pointed to a strange figure, older than the Voltaire who bought the artichokes. His knees were bent, his limbs long and straight; he had a little, yellow, parched-up head, with just a tuft of white hair upon the under-lip; the cheeks and jaw were sunken—all, from head to foot, withered and in decay—including the deep collared coat, and the greasy black cravat that reached under the ears. Set deep in the head were two eyes that glanced and sparkled to the right and left. The venerable warrior in the world's fight stopped near us, and passed nervously between two stalls. Behind lay scattered leaves of endive upon the stones. The sharp eyes had fallen upon these; and while he stooped to fumble among them, he said to the stall-woman, with the grand air common in his youth, "You permit me, madame?" Her hard face relaxed—to children and the aged the French people are ever tender—and she smiled upon the intruder, saying, "But, perfectly, sir." And the old man picked a little salad from the castaway leaves.

I should have been delighted if the lean veteran would have accepted an invitation on the spot to the little restaurant at hand, where I saw "onion soup at all hours" painted in the window. It would have warmed the blood in him, and, as Mr. Baker remarked, would have taken a little of the east wind out of his bones. But that poor man was a proud man, and would have resented the liberty had the market woman ventured to offer him one of the chickory heads that were spread before her. He was a twelve o'clock hunter pur sang; a sportsman, not a beggar. And he will die on his hunting-grounds, but not of starvation, for he has every corner of the halles at his finger ends; he can feast on two or three sous a day. He manages his own fourneau economique—well, Monsieur Thiers makes his own coffee. How the aged frequenter of the halles obtains the few sous is not worth speculating upon; for round about this mighty marketplace the inexhaustible ingenuity of the French race has devised little industries that have been the delight and wonder of many observers from Privat d'Anglemont downwards. Only the other day a prisoner, before the tribunal of Correctional Police, proclaimed a fresh addition to the extraordinary list. He was, he said, in reply to the court, an oyster trimmer. I was familiar with the carver of cock's combs, and the

asticot breeder, but had never heard of the oyster trimmer. Pierre Planat, who follows this art, is engaged to trim the shells of oysters to a shapely circle for the *ecaillières* of the good restaurants, he says, "in order to give them a seductive appearance to the eye." An idea, cruel to the oyster, but completely in harmony with the trimness and method of the halles.

There is order even in its poorest corners, where Madame Etienne Brou sells two lumps of meat floating in a slab soup, for two sous. Many years have passed since I first visited the *marché aux arlequins*, and had the honour of making it known to the world. It has developed and been systematised since my early days in Paris, like everything else in the capital. There are improvements on the original *arlequin*, so called from the fortuitous course of coloured atoms of which it was composed. To-day Madame Brou, of the mighty spoon, is first favourite in the *arlequin* trade, having contrived to give to her stew a special aroma, particularly grateful to the nostrils of the *chiffonniers* and scavengers of the capital. She has some six hundred customers every morning, whom she satisfies in the way of soup and meat for one penny. Her company includes the market porters, bricklayers, and scores of unclassed unfortunates, followers of unheard-of industries, who rove in the neighbourhood of the halles, as the centre of cheapness. Gallic wit plays about her saucepans and insinuates all kinds of charges against the *arlequins*; but she has the best of the laugh to the jingle of her sacks of sous. She makes no secret of any part of her trade. It is the result of the general economy which is the salvation of her poor countrymen. Her pans are full of crumbs from rich men's tables, "the better reason for eating them," she says, "since they are certain to be of the best." And her establishment is a vast improvement on the *Lapin Blanc* of old times, and the *Petit Louvre*, which the war broke up.

"Suppose," I put the case to Mr. Baker, after leaving Madame Brou's, "suppose we were to carry this plan across the Channel, and propose it as a matter of business to some of those busy gentlemen we see so often reading dreary papers to sleepy audiences behind a bottle of water, and between a pair of lamps. We would suggest to them to tie tape tightly round their papers, blow out the lamps, and wash themselves of lecturing with the bottle of water. Then they should take a district in

which they would arrange to buy up all the broken food. A large shed should be hired, and in this all the good, and clean, and sweet food should be cast into pans, and treated just as Madame Etienne Brou treats the food she buys. There would be good hot penny dinners for the starving poor of London; and, mind this, better, more comforting, and sustaining dinners than they now get under any circumstances whatever."

"We should fail," Mr. Baker observed, firmly. "And you might thank your Bolts and that stiff-necked and stiff-minded class who will try nothing but a leg of mutton, and have only one way of cooking a potato. It is they who teach the poor and the workpeople all their stupid prejudices: to call a ragout a mess; in short, to refuse all except the very dearest forms of food."

"Teach them to make hot onion soup for the market people, instead of bad tea and coffee, on winter nights. It would be a godsend to them, and keep scores of them from the public-house."

Mr. Bloomsbury Baker only shrugged his shoulders, and suggested we should drive our heads together at once against the charred walls of the Tuileries.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

AN IRISH HIGHWAYMAN.

FROM some reason, probably the scantiness of traffic between great commercial centres, highwaymen have never been abundant in Ireland. Perhaps good Saint Patrick, who drove out the toads and the adders, but unfortunately left the demagogues and the Ribbonmen, put his ban upon them long ago. Certain it is, at least, that the man in the mask, bestriding the smart chestnut mare, and with the butt-end of a pistol sticking out of the right-hand pocket of his gold-laced coat, does not figure conspicuously in Irish social history, though no doubt many a rich man's purse has been lightened in the Emerald Isle, and many a frightened traveller has been awoken by the muzzle of a blunderbuss breaking the glass of his post-chaise window. Of the few Irish gentlemen of the road, however, who have combined a certain gay, reckless courage with thieving, and have shown a chivalrous recklessness in robbing honest men, James Freney is the most notable; and some of his exploits we now propose to relate.

This Freney, whom Mr. Lever has cele-

brated in a rattling ballad full of his usual fire and fun, was the son of a bailiff in the service of Joseph Robins, of Ballyduff, in the county of Kilkenny. The active and nimble boy was brought up to help in the pantry and to wait at table, but he soon grew idle and careless, and spent all his time at races, hurling-matches, and dances.

In 1724 the lad married, and, without obtaining the freedom of the city, set up in business at Waterford. After disregarding eleven summonses, and threatening to fight one of the magistrates, and maim the first man who attempted to rifle his house, as had been threatened by these remarkable expounders of Irish law, Freney, quitting Waterford with vows of revenge, settled at Thomastown, where he soon got fifty pounds in debt, and had nothing left to satisfy his creditors but his furniture and his riding mare. At this crisis the tempter who knows the moment so well, stepped in in the person of a neighbour, named John Reddy, who had belonged to a celebrated band of thieves, known as the Kellymount gang, but had turned informer. In an evil hour Freney consented to go and stop some drovers on their way to an adjoining fair with their pockets full of cash. The first person they bade "stand and deliver" said it was hard usage for a gentleman on the king's road, on a Sabbath day; but, nevertheless, with some remonstrance, handed over fifty pounds, out of which Freney generously returned him one pound thirteen shillings and tenpence for his expenses, as he protested he had a long way to travel.

Burglaries in Ireland, in these times, were rather rough affairs, and the loneliness of the houses attacked enabled thieves to practice any violence, without much danger, unless the inmates were prepared and determined. Freney and two comrades next broke into the house of Mr. Collier, a clergyman, who had offended Freney on a certain occasion by persuading his master, Mr. Robins, not to give him a new suit of clothes. Blacking their faces, and lighting candles, the three men, with a sledge-hammer brought from a neighbouring forge, broke open a sash window. Freney then threw one of the men, who seemed afraid, in headlong, and he opened the house-door for the others. They secured some plate and money; and soon after Freney and two cotters of Mr. Robins, whom he had corrupted, broke open a house at Ennis-teague, the report being that the proprietor had a quart bottle full of gold. They

found, however, only forty guineas, and a bag of halfpence, which they at first mistook for more precious metal.

In the midst of these and similar daring plunderings, Freney, with his specious cunning, so contrived to keep up appearances as to induce Mr. Robins, of Ballyduff, to send for his wife as housekeeper, and to persuade Freney, of whose honesty and courage he felt no doubt, to come and guard his house.

But a person now appeared on the scene whom even Freney's cunning could not long baffle. Counsellor Robins, after summer circuit in Tipperary, heard of the gang of robbers which infested his brother's estate, and came to Kilkenny, determined to restore the county its once honest name. The counsellor had the eye of a hawk, the perseverance and pluck of a bulldog, and the restless energy of a ferret. He threw his whole soul into the matter, and with his consummate knowledge of the peasant character, set to work at once to shape his tools. His careless brother at once disclosed his suspicions of Freney, who spent his whole time in racing, hunting, drinking, and gambling. A trusty peasant, in whom the counsellor confided, expressed suspicions of the same person, though he feared being murdered. The counsellor then gave the man money, and told him to buy two or three gallons of whisky, take them to Moll Burke, an old woman who kept a shebeen at the end of Mr. Robins's avenue, invite all the suspected men, and make them drunk and quarrel, and then report their disclosures and mutual recriminations. The meeting took place, and a woman present soon accused Freney, Walsh, and the two Graces, of several robberies.

The toils were gathering fast around Freney. Soon after this two other men were apprehended, and gave information against him. Worst of all, a comrade named Bulger started for England, taking with him by accident a gold watch and diamond ring, and some plate of Freney's, who in vain searched a day and a night for him, threatening to blow out his brains. Freney soon, however, collected a new gang, but lay by till the assizes were over to see how it would go with his chained-up comrades. Determined to save these men, Freney contrived to bribe six of the jurymen with a ten-pound tankard, a four-pound ladle, and some tablespoons, and the men were acquitted, to Counsellor Robins's rage and vexation. Nevertheless, two of them were presented as vagabonds, and being

unable to find security, were duly transported; three others were convicted, and Freney himself and Bulger were proclaimed at Naas.

Freney's adventures have already introduced us to some sufficiently wild and lawless scenes of Irish life in the reign of George the Second; but we now come to the robbery of the Waterford cars, the scene of which might well have been the frontier of Persia, rather than a country under English rule, and supposed to be civilised. Grace and Walsh, two of Freney's spies on the present occasion, informing Freney that the cars had arrived at Thomastown, that prompt character at once sent for Whelan, a cotter from Muchin-an-Angle, with two horses, to be ready to remove the more valuable goods. Freney, with the tactics of a true general, then hid his three men among the heath near the mountain road above Castleblaney, while he rode forward to reconnoitre. Seeing four ploughmen at work near, he rode up to them, and desired them to take no notice of anything they saw that day, or he would blow their brains out. They, with the true peasant's sympathy for men like Freney, replied "they had their own work to do, and they would mind nothing else." Presently a spy came running to Freney to tell him the cars were coming through Castleblaney, and were only about a quarter of a mile off. The moment the cars drove up to the mountain, Freney rode up to the drivers and bade them stand, or he would blow their heads to bits. The men at first refused, but soon complied, and drove the horses off the road. Freney told them that as he could get no money from gentlemen, he should require one hundred and fifty pounds ransom. He then sent his three men off with four of the cars towards the lands of Killimackshame, while he himself rode in a different direction into the mountains with the carmen and the five other cars. Presently discovering one of the carmen to be Toby Lewis, a spy of Mr. Robins, Freney presented his musket and told him to fall on his knees and prepare for another world. The poor wretch swearing he was compelled to become a spy, begged Freney to go after his death and kill his wife and five children, for they would starve without him. For their sakes Freney, in his autobiography, says he spared the rascal's life on the promise never to spy again. A little time after some turf-cutters on the mountain coming in a body towards Freney, he desired them to stand off and take no notice, or he would fire among them. They

at once sheered off to the bog from whence they had come. Freney then drove towards a shebeen, intending to generously give the carmen a barrel of ale to cheer them up, but finding none, pushed on towards Powerswood, leaving behind one of the cars that had overturned. One of the carmen then begged for a box that he said belonged to a poor pedlar at Kilkenny, but which afterwards turned out to contain three hundred and sixty guineas, and some plate and rings, belonging to a rich Waterford jeweller. Freney granted his request, and sent the overturned car back to Waterford by the man. The rest of the carmen he left in a cabin till the morning, and rode on to join Grace and Nash. He found them rifling the cars and wrangling over the spoil. Being nightfall, he drove the cars beyond Ballychoughsonst into the mountains, and from there to a valley in Polhilloge lands, where they unloaded the cars and hid the spoil under some fresh-cut heath and furze. They then drove the cars to and fro about a mile and a half off to baffle the expected pursuers. Near Knockaroura, at daybreak, Freney, finding a cleft in the mountain, lay down with his loaded musket under him, and took a sleep till Nash's mother came to ask him to breakfast at her cabin on Ballychoughsonst. There a spy informed him that the militia and merchants of Waterford were in hot pursuit, declaring they would take him dead or alive, and had spies at Powerswood, Knockaroura, and the hills of Ennistearogue.

Freney soon started to get over the river Nore and escape to county Carlow, but there were spies on every hill, and it was impossible to shun their notice. Meeting a neighbour, Freney asked him to try if he could get into Black Castle undiscovered; but knowing there was a great sum of money offered for his arrest, and fearing treachery the moment he was gone, Freney turned off the narrow road from Ennistearogue and plunged into a brier brake, where, with a loaded musket and case of pistols beside him, he fell fast asleep. Unluckily for Freney, as he lay there snoring among the brambles, one of the carmen he had robbed happened to pass; the man, peeping in the bushes and seeing him, went to the pursuers and offered to betray him for five pounds, of which he received two shillings and eightpence as earnest, and the fellow soon returned with about fifty armed men, including eighteen of the Waterford militia grenadiers. They

divided themselves into two parties, one before Freney, and one behind him, and three of the most daring of the soldiers advancing to where the carman pointed, fired together. The noise awoke Freney with rather a start, but finding he was not hurt, he prudently lay still, thinking they might go away, but presently a man cried, "A devil a one there is in the brake." Then coming nearer, the fellow cried out, "There is a pig or a dog here," upon which Freney fired and shot him through the wrist. The men on both sides then retreated for a time and sent off their wounded companion to Ennistearogue, asking Sir William Fownes for more men and ammunition, telling him Freney was dead in the brake. Sir William sent what they required, but at the same time suggested they hardly wanted more men to capture a dead body. The soldiers then continued occasional firing for about two hours, four at a time firing together, the balls whistling near Freney, and even grazing his head and side. He occasionally presented his musket at them, but it missed fire several times. As soon, however, as Sir William's men arrived, a groom dashed at the brake and tore it open with his horse's hind-legs. Freney presented a pistol at the groom, but holding it straight the fire could not get at the pan. The other fellows shouted, "Pull him out by the leg, he's dead;" they then advanced within pistol-shot, and one of them fired at Freney, who firing in return, hit him in the hand, and he ran off screaming, "I'm kilt!" Freney then primed his musket again, and feeling certain of death, ran out at them resolved to die hard, crying, "You blackguards, I'll blow your brains out!" and wheeling round his gun, threatening right and left. They all ran away at this, except Sir William's groom, who was charging his pistols; Freney ran up to him and presented his musket within two feet of him, and the man turned, not to see his death shot fired. The gun, however, missed; Freney then threw it out of his hand, leaped a big quickset hedge which was near, and crossing a field at the double, stole down another dark hedge till he came to a valley, where he found a horse tied. He then mounted, dashed through the river Nore and got into Lakingorrah wood, where he had hidden arms and ammunition, and expecting pursuit, prepared for a second attack; but heavy rain stopped the pursuers, who returned to Ennistearogue.

Grace, in the mean time hearing Freney was killed, resolved to set the furze on fire

and burn all the goods from the Waterford cars. Freney lay all that night at Dolbin's mill, not a musket-shot from the wood, and sent a spy to find out what his pursuers were after, and to learn if they had discovered the goods. The spy returned with news that a man from Ballychoughsonst had stolen a large chest of green tea, and that the country people, and some of Sir William's workmen, had also had their pick. Freney then sent for Grace and Nash, and kept guard all the next night over the goods. Then discovering the chest of tea, and hiding it in a brake near the ditch of a friend's garden, he sent to the Waterford merchants, who had come to Powerswood, to bid them meet him without arms, and arrange about the ransom. The merchants came to the trysting place, and Freney going up to them, a "fusee" in his hand and a case of pistols, the merchants declared they had not sent the soldiers in pursuit, and hoped Freney would not be angry, as they had "met upon honour."

Freney, who soon forgot injuries, declared he would entirely trust them, but he wanted the ransom quick, as he had far to ride that night. He asked one hundred pounds, but they could only muster fifty, which Freney accepted, and sent Grace to give them the goods. A night or two after, Freney was all but surprised by a party sent by Mr. Robins to take or kill him; but he replied to their challenge in Irish in a feigned voice, and so escaped. The next night, Freney, drinking too much claret with a friend, near Burntchurch, fell into an ambuscade organised by Nash, and planted on both sides of a narrow road. All at once guns blazed away from both sides. One bullet knocked off Freney's hat, another grazed the calf of his left leg; while two bullets lodged in his right thigh. Once through the fire, Freney alighted and called on the cowards to appear; but none dared. Then thinking they might be stalking him along the ditch, he dashed across the country, took off his mare's bridle and saddle, and hobbled to Killimackshame, where he got another horse, swam the river Nore, and got to his old haunt in Lakingorrah wood, where he stayed all day. At nightfall, Freney employed a boy to catch him a horse, and rode in great pain to the house of a friend named Miller, who, letting him in at a pre-arranged signal, made him up a bed, washed his wounds with brandy, and sent to Kilkenny for a surgeon. Freney then dressed up as a sailor, and pretended to be a man-

of-war's-man whom Freney had shot in the pursuit. The surgeon extracted one of the bullets, but could not find the other. Two days after, one of his messengers stopping out late, Freney grew suspicious, so rode off to Dennis wood, and went down the river to a fresh place of concealment. After two days he went to Clonnemuck wood, and there hid for five days, dressing his own wounds and corresponding with his spies, who advised him to shoot Counsellor Robins as the only way of preventing such incessant pursuit. Freney replied, he had no heart for such a matter, as he had eaten so much bread in the family, and, moreover, that it was his own faults that had brought him into trouble. He then, as spies were set on him on all sides, resolved to go further into the mountains towards Grange. Halting, however, at Miller's house, he was detained till an ambuscade was laid for him, and as he rode off, a man fired and shot his mare from under him. Freney alighting, and falling on one knee, cocked his blunderbuss and waited for the enemy; none appearing, he crept along ditches to the end of two roads, and waited till his foes should come by to have his revenge, but they never came. He then hid in a corn-field, and afterwards in Clonnemuck wood, and despatched a message to Waterford for a vessel to send a boat for him that he might escape to the Isle of Man and thence to France. At the same time he resolved to go well armed, in order to blow out the captain's brains if he proved treacherous. Driven by a storm into Dublin harbour, from Wicklow he escaped to Kilkenny in the disguise of a woman, and soon joined his old comrades at Burntchurch. Various reports were now current; some said he was shot, and buried on the banks of the Nore, and several churchyards were searched to find his body. Nevertheless, the search for him still continued, and the resolute counsellor was more bent on his capture than ever. By a stratagem the wily lawyer surprised two of Freney's gang, Phelan and Grace, as they were breaking into a farmer's house, and Phelan soon after died from the wounds he had received.

Counsellor Robins set his teeth closer than ever now, and summoning eighty of his own and his brother's tenants, swore them all separately to give him intelligence of Freney, and offered five hundred pounds to any one who would secure the rascal's arrest. These spies, who had measures of the length and breadth of Freney's shoes, went out every morning looking for

his tracks, but Freney baffled them by wearing an enormous pair of pumps, and riding over the heath up into the mountains, where he could not be tracked. One night Freney broke into the house of a spy named Welsh, and putting a knife to his ear, swore he would cut it off, and then, making the man put his leg on a stool, he seized a hatchet, and swore to cut off the limb. One of Freney's men, enraged at these mere threats, fired a pistol at Welsh, while the rest of the gang swore they had not come so far to trifle with a thief, and that they would kill him at once; the spy begged Freney to spare his life, and promised to swear solemnly before the congregation at the next mass that he would never be a spy again. Mr. Robins, however, forbade the man going to chapel, and charged the priest to curse any person who entertained Freney. Beggars were also employed to gather information of the daring robber's whereabouts.

About this time Freney's old friend, Bulger, returning from England, Freney forgave him, and joined him in a burglary in Queen's County. The country was now all up against Freney, and spies watched his every movement. One night Freney, Bulger, and Stack, a shoemaker, went to the house of a man named Philip M'Guire, to sup and drink a bowl of punch. M'Guire at once sent to a Mr. Blunt, of Kilkenny, to come and capture the redoubtable highwayman. Freney, with his quick eye, soon saw mischief in Philip's face, and putting his hands on his forehead, and looking straight at him, he said, "You may be a very honest man, but you look very suspicious." Soon after this a boy, paid by Freney for watching outside, ran in and said there were a number of men who looked like enemies coming up to the house, on which Freney snatched up his own and Bulger's arms, and pushed M'Guire before him out into the road. Four shots were instantly fired, one of which shot off M'Guire's arm. Freney, seeing a shot come from the haggard, made straight for that place, threw away his blunderbuss and pistols, and leaping the wall, escaped three shots, and got safe into a fallow field. Bulger, in the mean time, thinking Freney was taken, was grazed by a bullet, but also escaped. On Freney whistling for Bulger, the enemy rode off. Freney, with the charmed life, then hid for several days in the mountains, and got to Brandon Hill, where he could see what he called the "Kilkenny army," two miles off, gathering in every direction. The spies became now so numerous that several

of Freney's gang deserted him. Two fled to Newfoundland, a third was taken. Five others were caught, and sent to Kilkenny jail. Stack, another of Freney's men, to whom he had given twenty pounds to go to England, returned, and offered the Kilkenny gentlemen to shoot Freney when he was asleep. Stack was soon after sent to jail for a robbery of arms, and Bulger too was constantly tempted to betray Freney.

The Earl of Besborough and Colonel Morris sent word at the same time to Freney that if he would surrender and betray Bulger, he should receive a pardon. Freney then sent to Counsellor Robins, offering to convict several notorious thieves and receivers (including a justice of peace), if a pardon was obtained for him. But the counsellor sternly refused to sign this treaty unless Freney apprehended Bulger, Hacket, Bristeen, and Kenny, alias the Yellow Sailor, his accomplices, and surrendered the names of their chief harbourers. Knowing the counsellor's indomitable resolution, Freney sent to say he would submit to all the articles but the betrayal of Bulger, and that he chose rather to die than betray him. The counsellor declared that Bulger had several times proposed to waylay and murder him, and that as Freney had always opposed this he wished to save Freney rather than Bulger; moreover, he said Bulger was already in treaty to betray Freney. On the 8th of April, 1749, Freney resolved to submit to the terms, secretly resolving, however, to save Bulger. It was then finally agreed between Lord Carrick and the lord justices in Dublin, and was arranged by the counsellor's agents, that fifteen disbanded soldiers, tenants of the counsellor, should by arrangement surprise Freney and Bulger while robbing a house. In the mean time Breen, another of Freney's gang, had offered to betray Freney and Bulger. The two men were surprised near Callen. Bulger falling asleep after some whisky, Freney had guarded him all night, and in the morning Freney put a blunderbuss and two cases of pistols under his head and feet. All at once a servant-girl ran in and said one hundred men were coming up the yard, at which Bulger, though Freney begged him to surrender, snatched up a blunderbuss and wounded Mr. Burgess, one of the sheriffs of Kilkenny, so grievously that he soon after died. The enemy then set the house on fire. The robbers, however, each with a gun and a case of pistols, broke out, firing on both sides to disperse their assailants. The two friends got

through the crowd, but in leaping a ditch Bulger was shot in the small of the leg. Freney, determining not to desert his companion, walked slowly on till he got behind a ditch. Freney then turned at bay, and presented his piece at his pursuers, who fell back, and went for their horses to try and surround the two men in the open fields. One of the fourteen men (a gentleman's servant) first rode up to Freney.

"You son of a coward," shouted the highwayman, "you rascal, who don't get more than five pounds a year from your master, I'll put you in such a condition that your master won't maintain you."

On this the man apologised, said he was ordered to ride up close, and instantly rode back to the advancing force. Freney, seeing they were trying to cut him off from the ditch and hem him in, supported Bulger, who could not move without help. At length, seeing the pursuers coming within shot, Freney grew desperate, and laying down his gun, he stripped off his coat and waistcoat and ran towards them, crying:

"You sons of cowards, come on, and I will blow your brains out."

They then retreated, and Freney putting on his clothes helped Bulger forward. A second time the enemy advanced, but drew back again when Freney threatened them. By this time the two robbers had reached the wall of Lord Dysart's deer park, and got safely over, though fired at by their pursuers. Bulger now wanted to trust to the wood, but Freney, unwilling that he should be taken by any but Lord Carrick's party, helped him on half a mile to a brake near a cabin, where at night he could find shelter. They had been four hours making the two miles from the burning house. Imagining there were spies set at all the fords and by-roads near the mountains, Freney pushed on alone towards Tipperary, halting at nightfall at a cabin, where he bought a pair of brogues and stockings. He then, barefooted as he escaped, went on through Kinsheenhah and Poulacoppal, along the mountains to a cabin four miles from Waterford, where he had eighteen thorns extracted from the soles of his feet, and rested for some days after this very perilous hunt, the last of his outlaw career.

Here Freney heard that it was impossible for him long to escape death, for that even Bulger and his friends had resolved on his life. A friend of Freney's soon ended the dilemma by betraying Bulger to the Earl of Carrick. The same man also betrayed

Bristeen. Four others of the gang were soon after captured. The government at first refused to pardon Freney on account of Bulger having shot Mr. Burgess, but finding it was contrary to Freney's orders, they at last came to terms. Indeed, resistance was no longer possible, for Freney being suspected of betraying his companions, was threatened on all hands, and Lord Carrick sent him word privately that a party was starting to take or kill him. Freney set out to surrender himself to the earl, but learning that a party was coming from Thomastown with a horse and cart ready to carry back his corpse, he hid in a wood till night, and then went to Ballyduff, and surrendered himself quietly to the counsellor's agent. The earl sent a guard to conduct Freney, to his house at Ballilynnch, and from thence he was taken to Kilkenny jail.

Freney now had to earn his pardon, which the crafty rascal did with a vengeance. At the next summer assizes, Bulger, Bristeen, Millea, Stack, and three others were tried, convicted, and hung. At the next assizes, Reddy, Freney's first preceptor in roguery, and two others, also mounted the same gibbet. Earl Carrick and Counsellor Robins set on foot a subscription to enable Freney and his family to emigrate, but the county gentlemen, being less forgiving, refused to subscribe. Freney therefore wrote his autobiography, from which we have gathered these curious details, "to enable him and family to earn his bread in some industrious way in a foreign country," and dedicated the book in good florid English to the Right Honourable Somerset Hamilton Butler, Earl of Carrick, to whose intercession he owed his life. Freney's subsequent career, whether upwards or downwards, is unknown to us—whether he turned to good or evil; of one thing we may be sure, that he carried out his purposes with promptitude, courage, and unflinching energy, for those qualities permeated the very bones of Freney, the boldest of Irish highwaymen.

A CRUISE ON DRY LAND.

THERE are but few really wretched situations in store for the average easy-going being, whose lines are laid in places where there is no chance of trial or of adventure. The being may be wealthy, healthy, and wise, and thus know how to keep off all that may impair his health, wealth, and

wisdom. But he may have to cross the "silver streak," as it is complimentarily styled, and on its bosom may encounter a misery that has no rival, and which, like the grave, will level all distinctions. Take it any way you will there is no wretchedness that is so distinct and *sui generis*, that claims the grand council medal of misery so boldly as this of sea-sickness. There is nothing analogous—not even that waiting in the dentist's parlour, looking at the prints on the wall, or old volumes of Punch, the very muscles and ligaments of whose binding are now, protruding from convulsive usage. It has all the elements of a studious malignancy, a slow approach, a torturing by anticipation, like the room that grew smaller every day, or the swinging pendulum that descended gradually. At about eleven o'clock of a winter's night, when the night mail emerges from the tunnel at Dover, and trails slowly down the Admiralty Pier, the wind blowing in at the windows fiercely, the waves on each side boiling up, and the little steamer, with its white chimney springing up and down with a cork-like motion far below—at such a moment the most sybaritic feels ominously reduced to a sort of squalor, and is tempted to exchange with the pauper who is sleeping on a mat in the casual ward. Then follow the step-ladder, the wet decks, the oleaginous smell; then the tolerable steady progress to the mouth of the harbour; then the vast open surging sea, the first convulsive staggering plunge of the little vessel, and the two hours' horror.

If, during that agony, some collector were to go round the cabins soliciting subscriptions for a benefactor who had invented means by which these swinging, tossing berths could be made steady, the most prostrate dowager would find her way to her pocket to collect a handful of gold and silver. In a short period an amount sufficient to build a St. Paul's would be supplied. The subscription list would be stupendous, eclipsing anything hitherto known. It is said that an appeal to whatever tends to gratify the whims of that great organ, the stomach, is the most efficacious of any; it may therefore be imagined that when the great organ is in trouble, its claims would seem to be doubled. And yet at first sight it might seem to be hopeless to look for a remedy. That vast element, which makes a plaything of everything that is trusted to it, and holds within it a world of boisterous and over-

whelming forces, might seem as utterly intractable as a herd of wild beasts would be for a single man. Yet cunning man does not think of measuring his strength with such terrific odds, but contrives to take advantage of this conflict of forces for his own ends. The winds and the waves are rioting together; he uses the winds to propel his ship, while the waves, pushing against his rudder, actively guide him on his course. Still the boiling sea has its revenge, and makes the vessel go through the processes known as tossing, pitching, and rolling. This privilege it can retain, and has exerted it in the most outrageous manner. The most hopeful and the most ingenious have hitherto felt that the struggle against this was like struggling against the inevitable—death, old age, decay—these things must be accepted—and so must be sea-sickness.

One of the thoughtful ingenious men of the day, however, who had already measured his strength against tons of molten metal, which he had discovered the art of controlling, as it were, by the pressure of a little finger, not dismayed by this awful antagonist, prepared to grapple with him. Mr. Bessemer, whose name is already famous over the world in connexion with a marvellous discovery for the manufacture of steel, has turned his thoughts to this subject, and, as it might be said, if we were writing a burlesque, has studied it usque ad nauseam. From the bewildering chaos of motions which a wave-tossed vessel presents, he was able to work out a few principles through which the agonising springiness imparted, together with other tricks the mighty ocean is so fond of playing on those who choose to confide in its tender mercies, might be neutralised. The suggestion came, like all important improvements, from a very simple matter. The suffering passenger stretched on the floor of the cabin, or peering in a sort of morbid stupefaction from his berth, has noted, with a kind of dismal curiosity, the motions of the lamp—its green or yellow sickliness—that is hung in the cabin, and which, instead of being dashed from side to side with every burst of temper of the angry vessel, contrives to adjust itself, and dances airily and gracefully, while the sufferers below are being hoisted and rocked. The principle was duly worked out; but here came a difficulty. The public was naturally incredulous; the usual drawings would convey no idea, while a model would not help, unless the inventor could specially provide a storm and a tumbling sea, which should

give the mechanism a chance for coming into play. Even if he were fortunate enough to secure these blessed conditions, the curious, or the scientific reporters, would probably shrink from so rude and brutal a fashion of carrying out their duties, though this of course implied an uncomplimentary want of faith in the assurances of the projector. The only feasible solution of the difficulty appeared to be in contriving somehow to sail, or, at least, to be rocked and tossed upon dry land, and this Mr. Bessemer has accomplished in a way that would be called quite satisfactory, if anything connected with these lively eccentricities of the briny could be called satisfactory. And as the result we have sailed on dry land at the bottom of a pleasure ground, at the back of Denmark Hill, on that agreeable slope which stretches away across a pleasant country towards the Crystal Palace.

Rockeries and grottos hid the nautical prodigy from view as we first approached it; but the stranger was warned, by a sort of clank-clank, attended by the usual asthmatic affection of steam valves wheezing in great distress as the work was done, that the sailing on dry land was going on. In front of an admiring, yet scientific throng, a receptacle, in shape something like a monster merry-go-round boat, was sunk in the ground, and was see-sawing in a leisurely but determined fashion, now sinking, now rising, out of what might be called the trough of the sea, with unpleasant regularity. A heavy swell was decidedly on, and it was seen that a number of passengers were already on board. The trough of the sea was a square pit in which the vessel laboured thus heavily. On what might be called its deck was a sort of cuddy or roundhouse, about the size of one of those dens of misery, or Little Eases, at the head of the cabin stairs in the Calais boats. The cuddy seemed to be perfectly motionless. A small ladder or stair, with a rail, led up to a sort of gangway, by which the experimental passenger went on board, and which being made of a number of rods placed side by side, moved with the motion of the vessel in a flexible and accommodating way. The gentlemen of science, chiefly nautical, stood on the land, watching the gallant bark as she sank and heaved in the surf. A few of the more courageous went on board. Sitting in a little cockpit was a sort of helmsman with his hands on a lever, on which his eyes were fixed. In vain the elements (steam principally) spent their fury on the sides of the gallant

boat; in vain this went up, up, in vain that went down; the little cuddy seemed to laugh to scorn the impotent efforts of the tossing hull. The passengers, a moment before, trying to get their sea legs on, staggering about the slippery deck, and really beginning to feel squeamish, had only to step into this reserved enclosure to be restored to comfort and ease. The mariner in the cockpit has only to take his hands off the lever, in answer to the doubts of some sceptics who are on board, and straight a heavy gale comes on—cuddy, cockpit, and mariner begin to roll together in consort. The sceptics are convinced. It was to be noted that scientific human nature exhibits a feeble uniformity of jesting on this occasion, for every fresh passenger as he comes on deck utters nearly the same joke: "I declare, quite a heavy sea on." Some passengers were enthusiastic and convinced; some cold and incredulous. One gentleman said something about its being "a toy." The seamen were good-naturedly sceptical.

The principle has been explained, and already discussed. A vast number of drawings, executed in that clear and picturesque style of which architects have almost the monopoly, were shown, and from these it could be seen that a sort of V-shaped saloon being poised upon one or two points, would thus be able to rock and sway as the vessel moved. This balance and freedom of motion would enable it to be kept level by a steersman, who, by hydraulic power, would elevate it as one side of the vessel sank, and depress it as the other rose. The whole may turn out a complete victory over the watery main, but looking merely to the voyage just accomplished on land, it can only be said that a partial success has been obtained. The frantic, distracted plunging and tossing motions of a vessel in a gale seem as eccentric as those of some wretched creature mad with drink; and they defy all shape and description. She now takes a sudden leap forward like a whale when he first feels the harpoon, and buries himself deep in the water; now makes a flourish like screwing on a vast scale; now sets off straight downwards, in a race, as it were, to the bottom of the sea, producing a feeling in the seasick that, while the feet and limbs are accompanying the vessel, the bottom of the stomach is hurrying upwards, in the contrary direction, towards the mouth. It would seem then that the regular swing motion of our ship on dry land gave a very imperfect idea of these intricate movements, and the ingenuity of the inventor ought

to be exercised in devising a more complicated representation. Here is a suggestion borrowed from the stage to which he is welcome. When the theatrical vessel sails across the stage, in some theatres the motion would be conveyed by placing the craft on a pair of "eccentric wheels," with the result of imparting a double motion, namely, a rising and falling one, and a forward one. A little ingenuity might combine this with the existing model.

But it is to be feared that the whole is too good news to be true. The main difficulty is the impossibility of controlling, first, the overwhelming motion which takes vessel, and everything in it, down so many feet; and, secondly, what has not been alluded to in the discussion, the sudden and violent plunges, where the vessel is, as it were, without an instant's notice, dashed to the right or to the left, and which would defy the anticipation of the hydraulic steersman; or, if he was successful in his anticipation, might dislocate his gear by the jerk. That the Bessemer system is an advance, there can be no doubt; but the ocean is an "awful fellow" to have any dealings with.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER III. "CHERRY RIPE."

Now were Mr. and Mrs. William Gardiner going on a joint deputation to Mr. Braham Nagle. "Would he, or would Miss Nagle? Every one wished so much to hear her."

Mr. Nagle motioned over his spouse:

"Our kind friends here are good enough to wish for a little music. If you would not mind, Mrs. B. N. and I will just clear the ground a little. You know it's trying for a poor fluttering child to come out before a strange audience. Suppose we just, as poor Hopkins used to say—the best agent Braham ever had—play the curtain up a bit."

A servant had brought in an alarming pile of music (mostly of a frayed and ragged sort); enough, indeed, for a small Festival. Mrs. B. N. placed herself at the noble Collard, and nervously took a short gallop up the course, as it were, "to breathe her fingers." The steed stumbled a little, but the casualty was masked in a great dust, and scattering of gravel and stones. Mr. Braham Nagle stood out away from "the Collard," disdaining music, gazing on the audience with a look of sly humour.

For this was to be a buffo Italian duet, full of excruciating fun—that is, of volubility and patter of syllables. It began "CHIO SONO!" a loud cry from Mrs. B. N., whose voice was very wiry (she had been a great singer in her day), and which seemed like a scream for help. Her husband, turning half-round, made a reply, which, from his scornful shaking of head, seemed to convey some sort of bitter warning.

In this strain the opening recitative was conducted.

Then Mrs. Nagle had her slow and piteous air, during which time her husband had his eyes fixed on the ceiling, now with a smile of pity, now glancing at her with indignation, and now interpolating some spoken exclamation, such as "Ragazza!" Then came his turn. It was amazing how voluble he was, how he poured out words of expostulation, then of anger, then suddenly relapsed into good humour. He seemed to be hugging himself in some secretly sly and comical enjoyment of the most exquisite sort, but the enjoyment of which he had all to himself, though he strove hard to convey to the audience with winks, and nudges, and sarcastic shaking of his head, that some excruciating practical joke was going on. Gradually the lady was drawn into coquettish and rather shrill remonstrance; Mr. Nagle clattered over what seemed a paved causeway; her fingers strove almost ineffectually to keep up with the stronger vocal steeds; and the whole party, Mr. Nagle, Mrs. B. N., and the struggling hands, came panting and struggling in together, just "pulling up" for one protracted cry, roar, and crash before riding in!

The company listened wondering; but it was considered "fine" by all, save Lady Duke and a few of the more refined. Such decided histrionic singing had not been heard in Brickford since the great musical "Farmer" brought round his menagerie, to give an opera concert in the new and damp music-hall. On your highly refined people like Lady Duke, and on many of us, these realistic exhibitions rather jar.

William, the host, however, was delighted. His great laugh had been heard bursting in at some of Mr. B. Nagle's faces and posturings, and he came rushing up at the close with loud-voiced congratulations.

"Splendid! splendid!" he said, "quite the Covent Garden thing."

"Ah, my dear sir, these things bridge over the past. We stood up to sing that at the alderman's little party during the Festival. Catalawney, sir, was expected"

—Mr. Nagle always gave the open Italian sounds with a bell-like richness — “and, I was given to understand, spoke of us, and asked who we were. Grand, swelling creature! Ah, there were voices in those days. Now, sir, all wire, wire, wire.” And Mr. Nagle shook his head sadly over this decay, which his own organ and that of his lady rather fairly illustrated. Billy Gardiner did not follow him clearly, but was impressed.

“I am so glad,” he said, “that you did that before John; it will strike him about the organist business. It must. Such a performance in his church would not be heard every day. Humphries is getting past his work, and a little pressure would make him retire.”

“Then could you do me the favour—present me to the Reverend John Gardiner? Poor Braham used to say five words were better than five letters.”

On this the candidate organist, for such he was, was led over to the bearded clergyman, who paid him fresh compliments.

Meanwhile, young Mr. Duke was busily engaged entertaining the daughter of the Nagles. Young people, who are thus delighted with each other on meeting for the first time, take especial pride and exultation in taking care that this mutual relish shall be exhibited to all the world. Corinna, beaming with smiles, was unconscious of the attention she was exciting; while the enraptured youth was pouring out some confidence—the listening to which made her perhaps so charming. William Gardiner came to interrupt this delightful communion.

“Miss Corinna, you must let us hear your charming voice. No excuse will be taken.”

Excuses were made, however. But Mr. Nagle intervened authoritatively.

“Come, Corry,” he said, with a sweet smile, “it is most kind of Mr. Gardiner to ask you. Come over and give them the ‘Cherry.’ The ‘Cherry Ripe.’ I heard Waylett sing it one night at Grimani’s, in a drawing-room just like this. I did, indeed! She was staying with Grimani at the time, and he had asked just a few of the connewchenty. Come, Corry, love!”

To some observers it almost seemed as though Mr. Nagle considered that he was going to perform, while his daughter was to turn over the leaves, as it were, for him; so languishing were the glances that he cast about the room, so sweetly did he smile to himself when closing his eyes, as though wrapped in the enjoyment of cer-

tain harmonic excursions and strayings with which his fingers were engaged.

Corinna drew herself up proudly and with dignity, as the father strummed through the jocund symphony of that once popular melody. Then she sang. And with a voice so rich, and round, and daring that it seemed to be kept in reserve, as it were, and to be quite capable of emulating the dashing exploits of the professed prima donna. Heads nodded in delight as she tripped over the airy quavers of that pleasant lilt. Had not every one been engrossed by her, they would have been amazed by the singular pantomime of the accompanist, who conveyed the idea that he was extracting, controlling, modulating these enchanting sounds—his face now turned to hers with a sort of extracting expression, while his mouth assumed a circular shape as she touched a high note—and now with a sweet and coaxing smile.

When a difficulty was surmounted, his head suddenly disappeared altogether, and descended almost to the keys, over which his fingers rattled in renewed confidence. At the last high note his face lit up with rapture, his hands were in the air, and then descended with a crash, to finish in an easy canter.

Every one was enchanted; even the grim and suspicious face of Lady Duke relaxed. Such singing had not been heard in the room since the Brickford Hall had been opened. As for Alfred Duke, he was enraptured; and it must be said, that the fine figure and brilliant air of lyrical inspiration in the young singer was sufficient to cause any amount of enthusiasm. Other songs were called for. Some, notably William Gardiner, wished for more of the old English ballads; Mr. Alfred pressed for an Irish melody. Corinna said that she thought she was more familiar with that department, and Alfred Duke was heard going round the room:

“Miss Nagle is going to sing, When through Life once Blest we Roam. Such a treat! Her father says it is her grandest performance. Now every one keep silent, because all the effect depends on the words.”

Corinna commenced that most charming and touching of the melodies, to hear which is a relief after the hackneyed Minstrel Boys, Last Roses of Summer, and Halls of Tara. Her father, of course, appeared to be singing it for her; his face craning painfully out, his body at a slant to the right, and half off the music-stool; his mouth repeating every syllable, smiling an agonised smile, now seeming to deprecate

haste, as who should say, "For Heaven's sake, caution—go tenderly!" Honest William's eyes filled up, as he stood and listened, his arm affectionately round his parson-brother. At the close a burst of applause came forth. More songs were called, and by twelve o'clock that night Corinna was constituted a heroine—a grand attraction for Brickford!

Every one gathered round her as she finished the song.

"I never heard singing like it," said William Gardiner. But the homage most grateful was, of course, young Duke's.

"Oh, Miss Nagle, divine—divine! It goes to one's heart."

The father listened with half-closed eyes. "She did it well; ve-ry well—a little more rall-tan at the last three bars. Poor Braham always said that was half the battle in singing. Put on the break, here, there, and everywhere—that I take to be the golden rule."

"I don't agree with you at all, Mr. Nagle," said the young gentleman, enthusiastically. "It was perfection—could not be improved—whatever you mean by rall-tan——"

"Ah, a little professional abbreviation—short for rallentando. Ah, it's a great art! By the way, you have an organ, I know; I see it in the shape of your mouth. You have the true taste, sir, and instinct. You have melody, sir, inside. Pray let us hear you."

"Do, Mr. Duke. Oh, I should so like to hear you," added Corinna.

"Oh, absurd!" said the young man, almost blushing. "Why, I have never sung since the supper parties at college. You'd only laugh at me."

"I laugh at you!" said Corinna, turning away. "That is not fair."

The young lady searched among the music, apparently much hurt, and then sought her chair. Mr. Duke, much distressed, followed her.

"I did not mean—really no; but I am always saying stupid things."

"We only asked you to sing," she said.

"If you really wish it," he said, with some embarrassment, "I am sure I should be delighted—anything to please you. I do know, that is I used to sing at the suppers, in this Old Chair my Father sat; but I don't know the accompaniment."

"Papa does," said the young lady; "at least he could follow you."

"In this Old Cheeayre," said Mr. Nagle.

"Dear me, to be sure. There was an impostor called Triphook, who came down

to Brighton to give a chamber concert, as he called it; tickets half a guinea, if you please, and he sang that very thing. Soon blew up, though. Even the great Simms, who distended his lungs at the oratorios—ah, my dear sir, these things won't do."

In rather faltering tones young Mr. Duke sang the touching associations connected with the old chair in which his father sat, and the companion one in which his mother smiled—it would seem, from the context, to the exclusion of sitting. He was terribly frightened, and, to say the truth, the performance was a sorry, not to say a ridiculous one.

"My goodness," said William Gardiner, "what can Alf mean by making such an exhibition of himself! Some one stop him."

But Mr. Nagle led him over the ditches and hedges in the most soothing and tenderly paternal style, his face distending every moment as one would encourage an infant, his mouth making all the notes. While beside the singer, a low voice murmured now and again, as if in exquisite enjoyment, "Charming! So sad!" Lady Duke listened scornfully, and at the last bar gathered up her shawl lightly and rose to go.

"A voice of great capability," Mr. Nagle was saying; "only wants leading out. Good gracious, Corry, how like Grimani the night he directed Lady Towler's concert! I declare if I was behind a door now, I could hardly tell."

The party was breaking up. The musician and his family were a little disturbed at young Duke's disappearing with his mother and father, and without paying them, or Corinna, rather, the civility of "Good-night." But after a short delay they were relieved by his reappearance. He had put his parents into the carriage, but "must go to the club for a short while" before returning home.

Here were the Nagles wishing warm and grateful "Good-nights." Delightful indeed, it had been. "Corinna," he said, "was in the seven-and-twentieth heaven"—a multiplicity of beatitude not warranted by the text. Come again? Indeed, he would.

Young Mr. Duke must go down and "opera cloak" Miss Corinna, which he did tenderly; her tall parent, who was quite ready, being in a sort of rhapsody of admiration over a very ordinary match-box that was on the chimney-piece.

"Wonderful," he said to Mrs. Nagle, "how they make these things! The ingenuity—the foresight—the benevolence—the utility——"

The good man fancied he was speaking

of Providence—he was making play, as it were. But the maid in charge was gazing in wonder at his raptures over the match-box.

After a decent interval, when the whisperings, what the indecent would have called “sniggerings,” had died away, Mr. Nagle laid down the match-box, and said:

“We are going to walk, to perform a pedal passage. So da capo, my dear sir, some other night. God bless you!”

“Nonsense,” said the young man, “I am going by the Crescent.” He knew their address already. “I shall see you that far.”

He did not see much of them that far; for he and Corinna followed a long way behind—Mr. and Mrs. Nagle straying on in front. Mr. Nagle being seized with admiration for the stars, the streets, the gas-lamps, everything in short.

“Oh it was beautiful,” said Corinna, “it went to my heart, every note seemed so full of grief and tenderness.”

“And *you* say this. How happy it makes me. To tell you the truth I was not thinking of the words, but of something else. That was what gave the idea of such feeling to you. Oh, Corinna——”

“Halloo, you sir!” the conventional testy father would have exclaimed. But it must be remembered that the young warriors of our day receive the most prodigious encouragement from the admiring demoiselles with whom they consort, so that in a single night a fair maid has been known to be wooed and won. Competition is so brisk, and the market so——but this strain is too disrespectful. In short, these young gentlemen are privileged to say whatever they please.

“Recollect,” said Mr. Nagle, impressively on his steps, “this house, such as it is—lodgings, second floor—is always open to you. Seriously, my dear sir, I am anxious about that voice. We should not trifle with these blessings. In my humble way I should be delighted. Just drop in any morning or any night—any time that suits you, and we’ll take you over the round-lades. The do-o-o—remifasolasid-o-o-o!” chanted Mr. Nagle, with animation.

“Oh! I’ll come to-morrow, the first thing,” said the young man, in his off-hand way.

“You won’t forget,” said the beautiful Corinna in a low soft voice; their parents

had discreetly turned into the dark and narrow hall, quite careless of their child.

They entered their modest lodgings in the Crescent, where the trio gazed on each other with a sort of smiling satisfaction. In Mr. Nagle’s countenance it was triumph—soft and rapturous triumph.

“It is very pleasing, all this,” he said, with half-closed eyes. “Corinna, my girl, you did well to-night.”

“He’s in love with her,” said Mrs. Nagle, enthusiastically.

“Oh! hush!” said her husband austere. “Don’t speak that way; all in good time; it promises well. I like the young fellow very much.”

“Oh, he was so nice,” said Corinna, dreamily. “I think he would give up the whole world for me.”

“One thing is clear,” said her father, loftily. “I was more than justified in breaking up at that beastly hole, where I and my talents and my family were thrown away—utterly thrown away. A country village. Faugh! I wanted a field, and here it is——”

“Such a success!” said Mrs. Nagle. “Took the whole party by storm.”

“The place will be a mine I foresee. I shall start the Harmonic Matinées again, raising the subscription to two guineys. Eight lessons a guinea—why it is beggarly, sir!” (Mr. Nagle often thus addressed an imaginary male disputant). “Only worthy of the workhouse. I’ll not do it. Grimani got his guinea; but three a guinea will do for the first. Then we can raise.”

Mother and daughter presently retired to confide in each other—Corinna to unfold all the delightful things Mr. Duke had said to her. Then the ladies disposed themselves to sleep sweetly, while Mr. Nagle remained planning gorgeous musical schemes.

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"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

NO. 213. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1872.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BORN AND THE BORN."

CHAPTER XXXI. RUSTICATION.

MALORY was not visited that year by either papa or mamma. I had been so accustomed to a lonely life there, that my return in that serene and beautiful spot never seemed solitary. Besides, town life would open again for me in the early spring. Had it not been for that near and exciting prospect, without Laura Grey, I might possibly have felt my solitude more; but the sure return to the whirl and music of the world made my rural weeks precious. They were to end earlier even than our return to town. I was written for, to London, where mamma and papa then were making a short visit, and was deposited safely in that splendid, but rather dull house by Miss Pouden, who sped forthwith to London; where I suppose she enjoyed her liberty in her own quiet way.

I enjoyed very much our flitting from country-house to country-house, and the more familiar society of that kind of life. As these peregrinations and progresses, however, had no essential bearing upon my story, I shall mention them only to say this. At Roydon I met a person whom I very little expected to see there. The same person afterwards turned up at a very much pleasanter house, I mean Lady Mardoke's house at Carsbrook, where a really delightful party were assembled. Who do you think this person was? No titled person; not known to the readers of newspapers except as a name mentioned now and then, as forming a unit in a party at some distinguished house; no brilliant name in the lists of talent; a man apparently not worth propitituting on any

score; and yet, everywhere, and knowing everybody! Who, I say, do you suppose he was? Simply Doctor Droquille! In London, I had seen him very often. He used to drop in at balls, or garden-parties for an hour or two, and vanish. There was a certain decision, animation, and audacity in his talk, which seemed, although I did not like it, to please better judges very well. No one seemed to know much more about him than I did. Some people, I suppose, like mamma, did know quite enough; but by far the greater part took him for granted, and seeing that other people had him at their houses, did likewise.

Very agreeably the interval passed; and in due time we found ourselves once more in London.

My second season wanted something of the brilliant delirium of the first; and yet, I think, I enjoyed it more. Papa was not in such spirits by any means. I dare say, as my second season drew towards its close, he was disappointed that I was not already a peeress. But papa had other grounds for anxiety; and very anxious he began to look. It was quite settled now that at the next election he was to stand for the borough of Shillingsworth, with the support of the government. Every one said he would do very well in the House; but that he ought to have begun earlier. Papa was full of it; but somehow not quite so sanguine and cheery as he used to be about his projects.

I had seen ministers looking so haggard and overworked, and really suffering at times, that I began to think that politics were as fatiguing a pursuit almost as pleasure. The iron seemed to have entered into poor papa's soul already.

Although our breakfast hour was late,

mamma was hardly ever down to it, and I not always. But one day when we did happen to be all three at breakfast together, he put down his newspaper with a rustle on his knee, and said to mamma:

"I have been intending to ask you this long time, and I haven't had an opportunity; or at least it has gone out of my head when I might have asked; have you been writing lately to Lady Lorrimer?"

"Yes, I—at least, I heard from her, a little more than a week ago; a very kind letter—she wrote from Naples; she has been there for the winter."

"And quite well?"

"Complaining a little as usual; but I suppose she is really quite well."

"I wish she did not hate me quite so much as she does," said papa. "I'd write to her myself—I dare say you haven't answered her letter?"

"Well, really, you know, just now it is not easy to find time," mamma began.

"Oh! hang it, time! Why you forget you have really nothing to do," answered papa, more tartly than I had ever heard him speak to mamma before. "You don't answer her letters, I think; at least for months after you get them! I don't want you to flatter her; I wish that as little as you do; but I think you might be civil; where's the good of irritating her?"

"I never said I saw any," answered mamma, a little high.

"No; but I see the mischief of it," he continued; "it's utter folly; and it's not right beside. You'll just lose her; that'll be the end of it; she is the only one of your relations who really cares anything about you; and she intends making Ethel a present—diamonds—it is just, I do believe, that she wishes to show what she intends further. You are the person she would naturally like to succeed her in anything she has to leave; and you take such a time about answering her letters, you seem to wish to vex her. You'll succeed at last; and, I can tell you, you can't afford to throw away friendship just now. I shall want every friend, I mean every real friend, I can count upon. More than you think depends on this affair. If I'm returned for Shillingsworth, I'm quite certain I shall get something very soon; and if I once get in, depend upon it, I shall get on. Some people would say I'm a fool for my pains; but it is money very well spent; it is the only money, I really think, I ever laid out wisely in my life, and it is a very serious matter our succeeding in this. Did not your Aunt Lorrimer say that she thought

she would be at Golden Friars again this year?"

"Yes, I think so; why?" said mamma, listlessly.

"Because she must have some influence with that beast Rokestone; I often wonder what devil has got hold of my affairs; or how Rokestone happens to meet me at so many points; and if she would talk to him a little, she might prevent his doing me a very serious mischief. She is sure to see him when she goes down there."

"He's not there often, you know; I can always find a time to go to Golden Friars without a chance of seeing him. I shall never see him again, I hope." I thought mamma sighed a little, as she said this. "But I'll write and ask Aunt Lorrimer to say whatever you wish to him, when her visit to Golden Friars is quite decided on."

So the conversation ended, and upon that theme was not resumed, at least within my hearing, during the remainder of our stay in town.

My journal, which I kept pretty punctually during that season, lies open on the table before me. I have been aiding my memory with it. It has, however, helped me to nothing that bears upon my story. It is a register, for the most part, of routine. Now we lunched with Lady This—now we went to the Duchess of So-and-so's garden-party—every night either a ball, or a musical party, or the opera. Sometimes I was asked out to dinner, sometimes we went to the play. Ink and leaves are discoloured by time. The score years and more that have passed, have transformed this record of frivolity into a solemn and melancholy Mentor. So many of the names that figure there have since been carved on tombstones! Among those that live still, and hold their heads up, there is change everywhere, some for better, some for worse; and yet riven, shattered, scattered as this muster-roll is, with perfect continuity and solidity, that smiling Sadduceeic world without a home, the community that lives out of doors, and accepts, as it seems to me, satire and pleasure in lieu of the affections, lives and works on upon its old principles and aliment; diamonds do not fail, nor liveries, nor high-bred horses, nor pretty faces, nor witty men, nor chaperons, nor fools, nor rascals.

I must tell you, however, what does not distinctly appear in this diary. Among the many so-called admirers who asked for dances in the ball-room, were two, who appeared to like me with a deeper feeling

than the others. One was handsome Colonel Saint George Dacre, with an estate of thirty thousand a year, as my friends told mamma, who duly conveyed the fact to me. But young ladies, newly come out and very much danced with, are fastidious, and I was hard to please. My heart was not preoccupied, but even in my lonely life I had seen men who interested me more.

I liked my present life and freedom too well, and shrank from the idea of being married.

The other was Sir Henry Park, also rich, but older. Papa, I think, looked even higher for me, and fancied that I might possibly marry so as to make political connexion for him. He did not, therefore, argue the question with me; but overrating me more than I did myself, thought he was quite safe in leaving me free to do as I pleased.

These gentlemen, therefore, were, with the most polite tenderness for their feelings, dismissed; one at Brighton, in August; the other, a little later, at Carsbrook, where he chose to speak. I have mentioned these little affairs in the order in which they occurred, as I might have to allude to them in the pages that follow.

Every one has, once or twice, in his or her life, I suppose, commenced a diary which was to have been prosecuted as diligently and perseveringly as that of Samuel Pepys. I did, I know, oftener than I could now tell you; I have just mentioned one of mine, and from this fragmentary note-book I give you the following extracts, which happen to help my narrative at this particular point.

"At length, thank Heaven! news of darling Laura Grey. I can hardly believe that I am to see her so soon. I wonder whether I shall be able, a year hence, to recal the delight of this expected moment. It is true, there is a great deal to qualify my happiness, for her language is ominous. Still it will be delightful to meet her, and hear her adventures, and have one of our good long talks together, such as made Malory so happy.

"I was in mamma's room about half an hour ago; she was fidgeting about in her dressing-gown and slippers; and had just sat down before her dressing-table, when Wentworth (her maid) came in with letters by the early post. Mamma has as few secrets, I think, as most people, and her correspondence is generally very uninteresting; whenever I care to read them, she allows me to amuse myself with her letters when she has opened and read them

herself. I was in no mood to do so to-day; but I fancied I saw a slight, but distinct change in her careless looks as she peeped into one. She read it a second time, and handed it to me. It is, indeed, from Laura Grey! It says that she is in great affliction, and that she will call at our town-house 'to-morrow,' that is to-day, 'Thursday,' at one o'clock, to try whether mamma will consent to see her.

" 'I think that very cool. I don't object to seeing her, however,' said mamma; 'but she shall know what I think of her.'

"I don't like the idea of such an opening as mamma would make. I must try to see Laura before she meets her. She must have wonders to tell me; it cannot have been a trifling thing that made her use me, apparently, so unkindly.

"Thursday—half-past one. No sign of Laura yet.

"Thursday—six o'clock. She has not appeared! What am I to think?

"Her letter is written, as it seems to me, in the hurry of agitation. I can't understand what all this means.

"Thursday night—eleven o'clock. Before going to bed. Laura has not appeared. No note. Mamma more vexed than I have often seen her. I fancy she had a hope of getting her back again, as I know I had.

"Friday. I waked in the dark, early this morning, thinking of Laura, and fancying every horrible thing that could have befallen her since her note of yesterday morning was written.

"Went to mamma, who had her breakfast in her bed, and told her how miserable I was about Laura Grey. She said, 'There is nothing the matter with Miss Grey, except that she does not know how to behave herself.' I don't agree with mamma, and I am sure that she does not really think any such thing of Laura Grey. I am still very uneasy about her; there is no address to her note.

"I have just been again with mamma, to try whether she can recollect anything by which we could find her out. She says she can remember no circumstance by which we can trace her. Mamma says she had been trying to find a governess at some of the places where lists of ladies seeking such employment are kept, but without finding one who exactly answered; papa had then seen an advertisement in the Times, which seemed to promise satisfactorily, and Miss Grey answered mamma's note, and referred to a lady, who immediately called on her; mamma could only

ventual seclusion, hungered and thirsted after gossip; and whenever they met, she learned all the stories from mamma, and gave her, in return, old scandal and ridiculous anecdotes about the predecessors of the people with whose sayings, doings, and mishaps mamma amused her.

Two o'clock dinners, instead of luncheons, were the rule in this part of the world. And people turned tea into a very substantial supper, and were all in bed and asleep before the hour arrived at which the London ladies and gentlemen are beginning to dress for a ball.

You are now to suppose us, on a sunny evening, on board the boat that had been moored for some time at the jetty opposite the door of the George and Dragon. We were standing up the lake, and away from the Golden Friars shore, towards a distant wood, which they told me was the forest of Clusted.

"Look at that forest, Ethel," said Lady Lorrimer. "It is the haunted forest of Clusted—the last resort of the fairies in England. It was there, they say, that Sir Bale Mardykes, long ago, made a compact with the Evil One."

Through the openings of its magnificent trees, as we drew nearer, from time to time, the ivied ruins of an old manor-house were visible.

In this beautiful and, in spite of the monotony of the gigantic fells that surround the lake, ever-varying scenery, my companions gradually grew silent for a time; even I felt the dreamy influence of the scene, and liked the listless silence, in which nothing was heard but the rush of the waters, and the flap of the sail now and then. I was living in a world of fancy: they in a sadder one of memory.

In a little while, in gentle tones, they were exchanging old remembrances; a few words now and then sufficed; the affecting associations of scenes of early life revisited were crowding up everywhere. As happens to some people when death is near, a change, that seemed to me quite beautiful, came over mamma's mind in the air and lights of this beautiful place! How I wished that she could remain always as she was now!

With the old recollections seemed to return the simple rural spirit of the early life. What is the town life, of which I had tasted, compared with this? How much simpler, tenderer, sublimer, this is! How immensely nearer heaven!

The breeze was light, and the signs of the sky assured the boatmen that we need

fear none of those gusts and squalls that sometimes burst so furiously down through the cloughs and hollows of the surrounding mountains.

I, with the nautical knowledge acquired at Malory, took the tiller, under direction of the boatmen. We had a good deal of tacking to get near enough to the shore at Clusted to command a good view of that fine piece of forest. We then sailed northward, along the margin of the "mere," as they call the lake; and, when we had gone in that direction for a mile or more, turned the boat's head across the water, and ran before the breeze toward the Mardykes side. There is a small island near the other side, with a streak of grey rock and bushes nearly surrounding what looked like a ruined chapel or hermitage, and Lady Lorrimer told me to pass this as nearly as I could.

The glow of evening was by this time in the western sky. The sun was hidden behind the fells that form a noble barrier between Golden Friars and the distant moss of Dardale, where stands Haworth Hall.

In deepest purple shadow the mountains here closely overhang the lake. Under these, along the margin, Lady Lorrimer told me to steer.

We were gliding slowly along, so that there was ample leisure to note every tree and rock upon the shore as we passed.

As we drifted, rather than sailed, along the shore, there suddenly opened from the margin a narrow valley, reaching about a quarter of a mile. It was a sudden dip in the mountains that here rise nearly from the edge of the lake. Steep-sided and wild was this hollow, and backed by a mountain that, to me, looking up from the level of the lake, appeared stupendous.

The valley lay flat in one unbroken field of short grass. A broad-fronted, feudal tower, with a few more modern buildings about it, stood far back, fronting the river. A rude stone pier afforded shelter to a couple of boats, and a double line of immense lime-trees receded from that point about half-way up to the tower.

Whether it was altogether due to the peculiar conformation of the scene, or that it owed its character in large measure to its being enveloped in the deep purple shadow cast by the surrounding mountain, and the strange effect of the glow reflected downward from the evening clouds, which touched the summits of the trees, and the edges of the old tower, like the light of a distant conflagration, I cannot say; but

never did I see a spot with so awful a character of solitude and melancholy.

In the gloom we could see a man standing alone on the extremity of the stone pier, looking over the lake. This figure was the only living thing we could discover there.

"Well, dear, now you see it. That's Dorracleugh; that's Harry Rokestone's place," said Lady Lorrimer. "What a spot! Fit only for a bear or an anchorite. Do you know," she added, turning to mamma, "he is there a great deal more than he used to be, they tell me. I know if I were to live in that place for six months I should never come out of it a sane woman. To do him justice, he does not stay very long there when he does come, and for years he never came at all. He has other places, far away from this; and if a certain event had happened about two-and-twenty years ago," she added, for my behalf, "he intended building quite a regal house a little higher up, on a site that is really enchanting, but your mamma would not allow him; and so, and so——" Lady Lorrimer had turned her glasses during her sentence upon the figure which stood motionless on the end of the pier; and she said, forgetting what she had been telling me, "I really think—I'm nearly certain—that man standing there is Harry Rokestone!"

Mamma started; I looked with all my eyes; little more than a hundred yards interposed, but the shadow was so intense, and the effect of the faint reflected light so odd and puzzling, that I could be certain of nothing, but that the man stood very erect, and was tall and powerfully built. Lady Lorrimer was too much absorbed in her inspection to offer me her glasses, which I was longing to borrow, but for which I could not well ask, and so we sailed slowly by, and the hill that flanked the valley gradually glided between us and the pier, and the figure disappeared from view. Lady Lorrimer, lowering her glasses, said: "I can't say positively, but I'm very nearly certain it was he."

Mamma said nothing, but was looking pale, and during the rest of our sail seemed absent and uncomfortable, if not unhappy.

ODD LETTERS.

A COLLECTION of odd letters, however worthless from a literary point of view, would prove passably entertaining reading. There are plenty of epistolary waifs and strays waiting the hand of a gatherer. We have, ourselves, found a few curiosities

of the sort, and following Captain Cuttle's advice, when found, have made a note of them. They may not be cited as models for imitation; they must not be mentioned in the same breath with the productions of Sevigné and Montagu, Walpole and Chesterfield; but for all that they may afford a little amusement to our readers.

Our first odd letter shall be one written from Paris in 1638, addressed to the French ambassador at Rome, and signed by Richelieu. In 1767 it was to be seen in the library of Edinburgh College, and a translation appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine for that year. This cleverly concocted epistle was on the face of it a letter of recommendation, but by folding it down the centre, and ignoring altogether one of the two columns so formed, the recipient became aware of the great minister's real sentiments. It is not possible to print the letter in these pages as it should be printed, but it will answer the same purpose if we italicise its surplusage: "Master Campy, a Savoyard by birth, *Friar of the noble order of St. Benedict*, is the man who will present to you *the notifications communicated by me in this letter*. He is one of the most *discreet, the wisest, and the least vicious* persons that I ever knew, *among all I have conversed with*; he has long and earnestly solicited me *to write to you in his favour, and to give him a suitable character, together with a Letter of Credence*; which I have accordingly granted to *his merit rather, indeed, than to his importunity*; for, believe me, Sir, *he deserves infinitely your esteem, and I would be sorry that you should be wanting in serving him through being mistaken in not knowing him well, I should be afflicted if you were so, as some worthy gentlemen have been on that score, but now esteem him, and those among the best of my friends. Wherefore, and from no other motive, I think it my duty to advertise you, that you are particularly obliged to take especial care of this man, to show him all the respect imaginable, nor venture to say anything before him that may either offend or displease him in any sort. For I may, and do truly say, I love him as myself, and assure you, there cannot be a more convincing argument of a mean and unworthy person in the whole world, than to be base enough to injure him. I well know that as soon as ever you are made sensible of his virtues, and shall become acquainted with him, you will love him as well as I do, and will thank me for this my advice. The assurance I entertain of your Civility obliges me to desist from*

urging this matter to you further, or saying any more upon the subject. I am, Sir, your affectionate friend,—RICHELIEU."

Dean Swift and Doctor Sheridan had a fancy for corresponding in English disguised as Latin. Let the reader exercise his (or her) ingenuity in deciphering the following specimen: "Iambicum as mutas a Statu, as lænas as ara que, as de a fas an ad aris; as hæ a vi as an assis, as queeras a duc, ast amas alam, as de ad as a do orna lis, as insipidas de ad vi negaris, or a potato in me. . . . Udi ne at urse de at mi o use. . . He re is ab illo fare—Ago use. A paro dux. Sum fis his, as a paro so les, a paro places. A pud in. A fri casei. Arabit astu in. Neu pes. Neu beans. Alam pi fit fora minis ter o state. A cus tardis ast it abit as at artis. Afri teris mi de lite. Mi liquor istoc qui, it costus api Stola quart. A quartos ac. Margo use claret as fine as a rubi. Graves. Lac rima Christi. Hoc. Cote rotæ. Sum Cyprus. As fine Sidere se ver Id runcat everne." Having invited the dean to dine with him, he invites himself to sup with the dean: "Præbe specus & Superaturus. Summas par a gusto eat. Sum colli flo ures, ac ab age, lætus fora sal ad. Invita lædito ac cum pani ure verens, not præte, nota coquet. A grave matronis pro per fora grave de an, an da doctor, an das cole mas tor:

I ritu a verse o na mollio mi ne,
Asta lassa me pole, a lædis o fine,
I ne vor neu a niso ne ata in mi ni is,
A manat a glans ora sito fer diis,
De armo lis abuti hos face an hos nos is,
As fer a sal lilli as reddas aro sis,
Ac is o mi molli is almi de lite.
Illo verba da, and illo verbi nite."

The above might almost be accepted as an anticipatory skit against the phonetic system. Spelling by sound is no new notion; illiterate writers have ever practised it to the best of their ability, and do so still. Here is an independent voter's reply to a candidate's circular at the last general election: "Not made hup my minde yet but as a member of the reform leige undecated (undecided?). Sir ———'s rights as been iserved a vere dirte trick by sum few of the members of the liege." The following letter of a trade-unionist is a curiosity in its way: "to the Secretary of No. 4 Lodge.—Sir the man that sends this Note is a plasterer working in the Strand where there is a member belonging to your Lodge of the name of Bird Alias Sailor he went in at humfry Smith were Bowden was formen when the men struck for 5.6 he went in for 5 shillings and he said he got men for that money that was a verey Little

while After the Lockout he did not belong to you then see the Privations that whe hav gone through the masters and some of the men who go in on Strik whe have some in No. 3 Lodge that has Paide the fine Bu: he takes such othes is the Reason that I lay the infirmation He as threatened to punch my head twice if I say any think a bout it young Richard Haderway was on Pickett the day he went in Belonging to No. 1 he ought to come forward he will if he summond if you think he is to be Let off all well and Good if not my Directions is—I can bring the boy forward that was serving him besides there is some of your members that know what i say is true if you take notice of this Let mee know a day or two beforehand. So know more from one that as suffered from such men." So far as its orthography goes, the above is a model of correctness compared with a summons received by a Blackburn doctor: "Cer, Yole oblige me uf yole kum un ce me I hey a Bad Kowd am Hill in my Bow Hills, and hev lost my Happy Tight."

A shopkeeper at Eastbourne lost a banjo from his door; some months after he missed it he received it by rail, while the post brought this explanation: "New Cut London. Dear Sur,—I am taking The liburty of riting to you to tel you as i av sent you the gitar as I borred from your chop in easbun wen i was done ther as I mens to be onest for the tim comin i was ard up wen i tok it and my mats didnet giv me my chare so i left em so i hop you think i am onest cos I sent It bak and i ant dun much wi it sinc i ad it it is a good wun an i fels sorry as i tok it and i ant got no money to pa carrege so I carnt and I hops as you send the wod case bak as it cost me a shillin and I hops as i uv bin onest as you wud send me a shilling if 2 plese i am very ard hup hand you wunt mis it I paked it in paper an I dont think as it ul be broke and i knos you wud send me a shillin if you wud plese send it to the post office in Chandy St. new Cut London and i can cal fur it an plese send the wod case bak i ant hyrt the gitar as it as ben in porn al the time and il nevr do it agen i mens to be onest in the time to cum—I remane Yowrs truly, M. R. wich i hop youl col me wen you rite." This banjo story reminds one of the umbrella that mysteriously disappeared from a merchant's office, and reappeared again with a note pinned to it. "This umbrallar as prade on my konshens ever sins I stole him." Not so good at restitution, though better at letter-writing, was the thief who

eased Mr. Grover, an American actor, of his pocket-book containing nine pounds, while he was in Cardiff, playing, as it happened, in a piece of his own called I.O.U. Mr. Grover got his pocket-book back per post, with this brief note: "Mr. Grover,—You are a good comedian, but you don't know how to keep money. I send you the pocket-book—as a valentine—but the cash is in better hands. We like Americans, they're always so flash. Yours, nine-pound's worth, I.O.U." Conscience knows no statutory limits; a gentleman, on opening a letter in an unfamiliar hand, read, "Sir, I swindled your late father out of 3*l.* 3*s.* about thirty years since. I am extremely sorry for what I did; I have enclosed the amount. May the Lord bless you, dear Sir, and all your family, is the prayer of your obedient servant." More conscientious still was the writer of a letter of restitution addressed to the Tyne Iron Company, in 1832. "Fourteen years ago," said he, "I was a workman in your Lymington Works, and was in the habit of pilfering little trifling things, only a pennyworth at a time. I have got converted to God, through the Wesleyan ministry, and they teach that restitution is necessary to salvation. God has pardoned me, and I hope you will. My conscience tells me I must have taken at different times, to the amount of forty shillings; and I am told, money at interest doubles itself in fourteen years. I enclose you five pounds, hoping you will never oppose the Wesleyan Methodists." If all workmen guilty of petty thieving were struck with a desire to make restitution in the same way, some of our great employers of labour would be enabled to add a nice little sum to their bankers' accounts.

In 1798 a farmer's daughter wrote to a friend of her own sex: "Dear Miss,—The energy of the races prompts me to assure you that my request is forbidden, the idea of which I had awkwardly nourished, notwithstanding my propensity to reserve. Mr. T. will be there. Let me with confidence assure you that him and brothers will be very happy to meet you and brothers. We girls cannot go for reasons. The attention of the cows claims our assistance in the evening." The last sentence is delicious and intelligible too, but we utterly fail to grasp the exact meaning of the opening one; we suppose the young woman wanted to go to the races and papa would not let her, but what her propensity to reserve could have to do with the matter is quite beyond our comprehension. A pretty "derangement of epitaphs" would

have ensued had the farmer's daughter been blessed with a lover as proficient in misusing good words as the inditer of a letter of introduction presented to a Southern planter by an applicant for a place as overseer: "Sir,—I am solicited by my friend —— to endorse his ulogy above which I do. His habits are temperate, his disposition congenial to social fluency in business. His comprehension of agriculture is exquisite artful. His firmness in his capacity equals his sobriety in habits. Also, have never been espoused, he leads a life of celibacy. So I think all the characteristics relative to yeomanry are centred in him." After this, the somewhat grandiloquent letter of the native, ambitious of being employed as census-enumerator in Madras, seems plain English enough: "Allow me the prerogative to intrude on your valuable time whose wheels roll in amber and gold. Yet to try by scroll is a useful maxim (though simple in itself) to young and old, rich and poor, and a great deal may be got by those who put this simple but useful rule into practice. Having heard that enumerators for the preliminary census are about to exist in the municipal department, I most respectfully beg to offer my services for the fore-cited post. If I fortunately succeed I will give you all the satisfaction I can produce in discharge of duties entrusted to me."

In 1761 a Smithfield publican was the favoured recipient of this extraordinary effusion: "Mr. Bray,—You are hereby desired to despatch yourself; I have heard a very good character of you, and therefore leave it to yourself whether you will die by dagger, sword, or poison; if you outlive this order above one hour, I have given directions to put you to death by torture. I am your affectionate friend, J. LANGDON." This threatening gentleman was, at all events, more polite than the trade-unionist who wrote to a clergyman: "Let me tell you that if ever I see Another letter from you or hear tell of you trying in any shape or form to make black sheep of me and my fellow-workmen you may preach your own funeral sermon the day previous to doing so for I will shoot you as dead as A Nit be you in bed or out of bed in church Chapel or Socristy I will Nap your pecker yes I will delight in being hung on your account on the Scaffold at Durham, and I will also take away the only spark of life that Mr. Spark has got if he does not keep his tongue within his teeth so you may go and tell him if you like as I intend to give him and you A little time to prepare yourselves

for the next world So you may go and try to make either A black sheep or a white one of him for I will make Black Sheep of both of you. So I hope you will be warned by me and take no further steps in the same course if you do I swear I will Crok you both for I may as well be hung for a Mule as a Donkey—VIRGIS MEIN NIGHT—Vengeance Street.” The skulking disciple of Broadhead modestly hides behind the safe shelter of the anonymous; your Calabrian brigand is of a bolder sort, and makes his modest demand in this style: “Don Francisco,—I beg you to send me the sum of fifty ducats, together with the following articles;—Four watches, four revolvers, two barrels, ten yards of light blue beaver, twenty bundles of cigars, two thousand feet of velveteen, sixteen hats, a hundred feet of galoon, two powerful spy-glasses, ten musical snuff-boxes with twenty tunes each. The chains of the watches to be gold. One alarum watch with corresponding gold chain, and twenty silk handkerchiefs. Execute quickly or the consequences will be terrible, for I will have your blood and your goods. Obey me with the speed of lightning, or I will turn upon you like a demon, and tear you to pieces. FRANCISCO GODINO alias FACCIONI, and DOMINICO PELOPELO.”

We have but one love-letter, strangely enough a rhymed one, written by a policeman, who, we grieve to say, betrayed the damsel whose charms made a poet of him. Here it is:

I have observed your genteel ways,
I've seen whot passes their,
And all my study are to please,
And you my only care.

I do esteem you far above
All others of your sex,
Possessed of every power to please,
Without a will to vex.

And while your beauties I admire,
Your virtues I adore;
I glow with friendship and esteem,
And love you more and more.

Now if these signs denote a hart,
To friendship feeling true;
Grant me the mighty boon I ask,
To be esteemed by you.

Our last example of odd letter-writing needs a few words of introduction. When, upon the conclusion of peace at Tilsit, Louis the Eighteenth fled for England in a Swedish frigate, he was rowed ashore by a boat's crew belonging to Her Majesty's ship Majestic, and left fifteen guineas as a gift among the men, that they might drink his health. Some time before, an order had been issued forbidding the acceptance of money from strangers, and the men refused

to take advantage of the king's liberality, but fancying he might lay their refusal to a wrong motive, they wrote to Admiral Russell a joint letter on the subject: a letter as admirable as it is unique. “Please Your Honour,—We holded a talk about that there 15*l*. that was sent us, and hope no offence, your honour. We don't like to take it, because, as how, we knows fast enuff, that it was the true King of France that went with your honour in the boat, and that he and our own noble king, God bless 'em both, and give every one his right, is good friends now; and besides that, your honour gived an order, long ago, not to take any money from no body, and we never did take none; and Mr. Leneve, that steered your honour and that there king, says he won't have no hand in it, and so does Andrew Young, the proper coxen, and we hopes no offence—so we all, one and all, begs not to take it at all. So no more at present—From your honour's dutiful servants, &c.” The old sea-dogs may have been simple rough fellows; but it will be well for England if her ships are never manned by worse tars than these blunt-speaking, loyal-minded, honest-hearted blue-jackets.

WALLSEND COALS.

It is of no use to advise the public—“When you ask for Wallsend coals see that you get them.” The truth is that, literally speaking, there are no Wallsend coals, and therefore it is an impossibility to get them. A search for those collieries, the produce of which figures at the head of every coal-merchant's price list, results in the discovery of a large scattered cidevant pit village, or rather series of pit villages, about midway between Newcastle-on-Tyne and North Shields. This village of Wallsend, deriving its name from being located at the termination of the great Roman wall which stretched from the Tyne to the Solway Firth, stands on a broad level table-land above the steep northern bank of the Tyne. It is surrounded with mouldy and weed-grown pit heaps of coal dross and waste, the relics of a time when coal-winning was an active industry at Wallsend. You ask for the collieries, and a venerable man, in whom the memories of the past are not wholly dead, undertakes to be your cicerone among the gaunt crumbling skeletons of disused engine-houses and mouldering timbers. This silent and solitary ruin was the once

famous Russell's Wallsend Main, that the Old Wallsend pit; this other, hoarier and more dilapidated than its fellows, was the New Wallsend Colliery. For the last twenty years at least the Wallsend collieries have not yielded an ounce of coal. As we pick our way among the field patches and over the crumbling relics of waggon-ways, it is a strange feeling to realise that far below in the bowels of the earth there ramify the multifarious workings of a lapsed industry. The pits and workings are full of water, "drowned," in mining parlance; and the coal-hewers of Wallsend have either emigrated, or are engaged in some of the new industries that have sprung into lusty vitality on the banks of the Tyne.

Before steam power was used, and while as yet there was no thought of a sale for any other kind of coal than household coal, were the palmy days of Wallsend, and the colliery system of which it was the grand centre. From Blaydon on the Tyne, west of Newcastle, to Cullercoats, on the eastern coast of Northumberland, there extends a section of the famous Ninety Fathom Dyke. This barrier divides the steam coal from the household coal, the latter lying in the comparatively small triangle, shorn off by the Ninety Fathom Dyke from the rest of the county. This triangle—the Wallsend area, as it may be called—was the birthplace and nursery of Northumbrian coal mining, and its sole output was household coal. The mines belonged to the great territorial magnates, the "grand allies," as they were called—Lords Ravensworth, Strathmore, and Wharnccliffe, the Russells of Brancepeth, Matthew Bell, the Brandlings, and others. It is recorded that coal was first won in Wallsend Colliery in 1781, but there were workings in the district very long before that date; for when the adjacent Heaton Colliery was inundated in 1815, the covered up mouths of old forgotten shafts, on which tall trees were growing, fell in from the withdrawal of the support of the water below. The chief collieries of the system, besides the Wallsend pits themselves, were Percy Main, Heaton, Killingworth, Howdon, Walker, Westmoor, Gosforth, Bigg's Main, &c. The "grand allies" were the despots of the northern coal trade in those days; but there was no want of geniality in their despotism, and there would be a keen competition now for cards to such a ball as was held at Gosforth when coal was first won there in 1829. The ball-room—a spacious, lofty, and brilliantly lit apart-

ment—was eleven hundred feet below ground, the naked face of the coal seam forming a portion of its panelling. The company, which numbered three hundred, of whom half were ladies, began to "arrive and descend" at half-past nine in the morning, and dancing lasted till after three in the afternoon. The viewers and managers of Wallsend were the Buddles, father and son, both men of great administrative ability, and the latter so skilful and originative as a mining engineer as to have merited the title of the George Stephenson of colliery work. From 1811 the viewer and manager of Killingworth was Nicholas Wood, the friend and ally of Stephenson, and in later life the greatest authority in the kingdom on every branch of practical and scientific mine engineering, and the first president of the North of England Institute of Mining Engineers.

The subjects of the "grand allies," ruled over vicariously by the Buddles and Nicholas Wood, were a race of many virtues and many faults, for some of which latter they could hardly be reckoned responsible. They were for the most part absolutely uneducated, for there was little time for schooling when boys went into the pit before they were six years old. They drank very hard, fought not a little, and thought nothing, when their blood was up, of breaking out into open insurrection against their lords and masters the "grand allies," and smashing or burning the belongings of an obnoxious pit. In the early days the pitman bound himself for a year at a spell, and since he was a scarce commodity he got an annual bounty in name of "binding money." In 1804 this bounty was as high as twenty guineas per man; in 1809 it had fallen to five guineas, and ere long it disappeared altogether, the pitmen preferring to agitate against the system of yearly bindings, for which fortnightly engagements have for some time been substituted. Before 1826, when the laws against illegal combinations were modified, strikes were dangerous things, dealt with as they were by the strong hand of the military operating at the bidding of the masters. But the pitmen were stubborn fellows, and made a good fight for what they thought their rights, spite of the terror of the "sodgers." In 1809 there was a general uprising on the question of the bindings. The recalcitrant pitmen were hunted down by owners, magistrates, and military, and every jail in the district was so crammed with them that three hundred had to be cooped in the

stables and stable-yard of the Bishop of Durham. Even in this strait they would not yield, and the grand principle of arbitration thus early was vindicated, a soldier and a clergyman acting as mediators. The local annals are full of records of strikes, mass meetings, riots, and destruction of property on the part of the pitmen, and the pages are sprinkled with their blood. The blood indeed was not all on one side; for so late as 1832 a magistrate was killed by the pitmen, for which crime one of the perpetrators was gibbeted on the ground where now stands the Tyne Dock.

Coal-miners in those days literally took their lives in their hands when they went down into the pit. In the collieries of the Wallsend system, there constantly loomed the double danger of fire and water. The seams of the household coal were exceptionally fiery and generative of explosive gases; and no man knew but that his next blast might let in an inundation.

The explosion record is especially ghastly. In 1803, thirteen miners were killed at Wallsend; in 1806, ten; and in 1809, twelve; at Killingworth, in 1814, twenty-four; at Percy Main, in 1818, four; and in 1821, fifty-two at Wallsend; in 1835, one hundred and one, and the year after, eleven in that most deadly colliery. Not even the tragic story of the Hartley catastrophe is more pitiful than the record of the terrible inundation of Heaton Colliery in May, 1815. As if a subterranean lake had burst into the workings, the water in a twinkling rose in the shafts to a height of nineteen fathoms, and soon increased to thirty-three, spite of all the pumping power that could be brought to bear. There were in the pit at the time of the influx seventy-five persons: forty-one men, and thirty-four boys: not one of whom escaped from the living grave. It was indeed not till January of the following year that the first body was recovered; and not until the end of February could be formed the long piteous procession to the trenches dug in the corner of Wallsend churchyard. On the gauze of a safety-lamp gripped in the hand of a dead lad, they found these words rudely written: "Love your mother, Johnnie; we prayed while we had time." That dreary Wallsend churchyard, with its dingy green grave mounds, as I saw them the other day, half hidden by grimy snow, how it teems with terrible associations to the student of colliery history! That ridge tells of the dead in the explosion of 1821; around this once stood a very sorrowful company of widows and orphans, when on

that summer forenoon of 1836, the five score victims of the explosion of the 18th of June, having been taken dead from under the earth, were put under it again in the consecrated ground. Those were times when "a coroner's inquest at the collieries was a judicial mockery," and when the stereotyped direction to the jury was "that this was one of those lamentable accidents which were so common to coal pits, and which no human foresight could prevent."

But the very imminence of danger in those mines of the Wallsend system that begot in some men mere reckless despondency, kindled in others an exceptional acuteness of sagacious wariness, and a fervid religious sense. The Established Church had little hold of the collier ground, which was a very kindly soil for Wesleyanism and Primitive Methodism. Secularly, the sense of danger and the tough athletic Northumbrian intellect combined to produce men who have made their mark on the country's history. George Stephenson, as he wrought his break in Killingworth Colliery, was planning the locomotive, and constructing his "Geordie;" and from Killingworth he went forth to be the author of our railway system. Before the Fairbairns went to Manchester and Leeds to found the vast works that are now world-famous, they were engineers at Percy Main. The Hawthorns of Newcastle, whose engine works are among the largest in the country, came "to bank" from out the Wallsend Colliery, and Story, the engineer, under Stephenson, of the York and Darlington Railway, worked as a miner in Wellington Colliery. The list might be lengthened indefinitely, for Stephenson, knowing his men, was prone to make drafts on the clear heads and sagacious brains he wotted of among the people he had toiled with in his early days. The pitmen of the now dormant Wallsend colliery system have imparted their distinguishing characteristics to the whole mass of their younger brethren, the pitmen of Northumberland generally. The race is the same in physique and in mental characteristics—harsh-featured, manly eyed, and stalwart; energetic, stickling for independence, and genial under the rugged upper crust.

As the workings of the Wallsend system ramified widely and more widely, the water enemy became more and more aggressive. The workings had been conducted wastefully, as was the manner in the early days, and there were evidences that the upper and more easily worked seams were ap-

proaching exhaustion. The water gained so rapidly that the pumps in use could not make head against it. There was no stupendous catastrophe as the grand finale. What seemed the inevitable was timeously recognised, and from mine after mine horses and plant were brought to bank, the pumps were knocked off, and the water left to work its imperious will. The gradual abandonment occurred in the decade between 1835 to 1845, Wellington and Heaton being the last two mines to maintain a resistance. One of the mines, indeed, and that, too, on as low a level as any, the Walker Colliery, worsted the water, and is working to this day. Its engineer, a man of prudence and foresight, saw the impending doom, and took in time his measures to avert it. In the Walker pit the water is "tubbed off;" in other words, the shaft is continued through what may be called the water stratum by an iron tubing or skin, and at present the lower seams, quite below the inundated stratum, are being successfully worked with hardly any inconvenience from water. Killingworth and Gosforth, on the outer fringes of the system, and on a higher level, also continue to be worked without great inconvenience from that subterranean lake which has inundated the mines of the system on the lower level. But Wallsend Main, old and new, is drowned, so are Percy Main, Howdon, Bigg's Main, and Heaton, all of high repute in the first half of the century as yielding the best household coals leaving the Tyne.

Mining engineers know that there is still much fine coal in the old upper workings of the flooded mines, and that below these, in the lower seams, there lies a vast quantity of somewhat inferior, but still readily merchantable coal. There are still fortunes at the bottom of the Wallsend pits, if only they could be reached and cleared of water. Modern enterprise has essayed the task. In 1867, the Tyne Coal Company was formed, having for its object the pumping the water out of these mines, with a view to subsequent working. The unfruitful royalties were acquired from the representatives of the "grand allies," and pumping operations commenced. A special pumping shaft was constructed and powerful pumps put down, which have been working continuously for over five years, throwing out in the day many thousand tons of water, which forms a steady stream like a mountain burn. Immense cost has been incurred, and some impression has been made on the subterranean water. Hebburn Colliery, on

the south side of the Tyne, but connected subterraneously with the northern system, has been pumped out, and is now at work; the northern collieries still remain drowned. Let us hope that some day or other the persistent energy which is at work upon them will be crowned with success, and that the engineman at the big pump on the knoll over against Percy Main will have it to shout, "She sucks!"

Meanwhile, the consumer need not adopt so strong a measure as to give his coal-merchant in charge for obtaining money under false pretences, because he sells what he designates "Wallsend coals." The name has come to be adopted as a mercantile generic appellation for all household coals of a certain quality, no matter where won, just as Hartley is the name for all northern steam coal, although the broken cross beam still hangs over the disused shaft of Hartley pit proper. It may be said, indeed, that in all these grand desiderata of household coal, high bituminous properties, specific gravity, and heavy brown ash, the Wallsends, in their palmiest days, could not compare successfully with coals like the Hettons and others, now wrought in the Durham household coal field.

THE CUPBOARD PAPERS.

XIII. MADAME BARBIZON'S CASH TEMPLE.

"THERE is philosophy," said Madame Barbizon to me one day, "in the workmen's song about *La Soupe et l'Boeuf*. Yes, it is sound sense to be content with a blouse instead of broadcloth; but what are we to do, you and I, when we have been rich, and now are poor? Turn to the left—this is the way to my Cash Temple. You laugh. I could go and order a dress from Madame Felicie; she would give me two years' credit, or I might pay by instalments. It would be a very great convenience for me not to part with my few napoleons to-day; but I have laid down laws for myself; and the first of these is that I am too poor ever to take a day's credit. Credit would ruin all my calculations. No, I must buy in the cheapest market I can find—cash. It is only the rich who can afford to run up bills. Don't you see, I profit by their credit?"

"Not exactly, madame; but I shall be indebted to you for an explanation."

"Why, in this way. The people who buy at long credit of the great modistes and other traders in dress, as they get their things carelessly—not feeling the

want or pressure of means—part with them freely. The cast-off splendours of the gay and frivolous duchess are, to all intents and purposes, new: her maid sells them. The same with the clothes of the duke: his valet sells them. It is the prodigal son who furnishes my Cash Temple. The velvet dress I once bought for two hundred francs had cost the wife of the prodigal son six hundred francs, and she had not worn it a dozen times. Again, a superb mauve silk grosgrain, beautifully trimmed with real blonde, feathers, sash, &c., a dress, in short, for a court ball, a friend of mine bought for one hundred francs. It had cost at least five times that sum—had been worn, say, twice. But here is the best of the joke. My friend, who was a poor official's wife, actually went to a ball at the Tuileries in this dress, and it was greatly admired as one of the toilettes of the evening. Afterwards she bought a blue and white striped silk dress, a simple but elegant young lady's toilette, for sixty francs. That—I don't know how, but the fact is so—was quite new. Another instance. A lady, wife of one of our popular admirals, who has got two or three giddy heads to cover, goes to my temple and buys, for about eleven francs each, bonnets that, at the fashionable modistes, would be at least thirty or thirty-five."

"But these are not second-hand, or second-head bonnets?"

"Certainly not," Madame Barbizon replied sharply; "they are simply bonnets for which you pay the cost of material, and a fair remuneration for the work and taste; but nothing for the name and gilded boudoirs of the lady who sells. It's very simple. So you see we poor ladies profit by the credit and carelessness of the rich; because we are not fools enough to take credit, or to overlook a single centime. I know that every franc of credit I take is a good sou out of my income."

Chattering in this way we came to the Rue du Temple, and then to the great Temple itself. It is a mart of extraordinary proportions, separated into long alleys of stalls, and including for sale a thousand and one things for use, as well as things for show. Men's, women's, and children's clothes, furniture, domestic utensils in endless varieties; but every item, to a bundle of toothpicks, a bargain. The crowding, the talking, the eagerness of the saleswomen, the iron determination of every purchaser to go away with a real catch, make up such a scene of money-grubbing and bargain-hunting, as you cannot match

in any other city of the Continent. There are rag-fairs in many places. We have Petticoat-lane on a Sunday morning, where the sharp greed is marked in deep lines upon every human countenance; but this has few points in common with the Cash Temple, through which I was hustled in the company of Madame Barbizon. For here, the merchants are not buyers. They have obtained, in their own cunning way, a stall of articles, which they are able to sell, at about half the price you would pay for them in the Faubourg Saint Honoré.

We turned into the grand avenue, and were at once seized upon by half a dozen women, eager to know what we wanted. Did madame require a pretty costume, superb linen, blankets, excessively cheap? Monsieur must not pass without looking at an extraordinary bargain in umbrellas. Lower Arcade doubled in width, and about equal times its present length, would about equal the main avenue of the Temple. The French saleswomen have the advantage over their English sisters in volubility, and in the ingenious forms of address with which they arrest the approaching customer. The stalls look low and mean under the lofty glass roof of the Temple; and, when the objects displayed are pendent bunches of second-hand dresses, recal to the English mind the four-post bedstead of Mrs. Gamp. The side and cross avenues from the main line are so narrow, and so stuffed with a mighty confusion of all descriptions of clothes, and so crowded with people, and the hurly-burly that sounds from them is so sustained, that it is well for the stranger to make his first visit to the Temple in the company of a lady who knows it well.

Madame Barbizon was taken by storm. What are you looking for? Pray approach. Look at these waterproofs, at very low prices. Does madame wish for a costume? We have some superb cloaks. Let me show you our round bonnets. Madame would be pleased with our collection of lace. Try our Rabagas bonnets; you will be delighted with them. Thus assailed we passed along, Madame Barbizon turning away the saleswomen to the right and left of her with a pleasant word. I was twitched by the coat-tail, held by the arm, arrested point blank, to the great delight of my friend.

"Answer them," she said, "always answer them, when you can, with a pleasantry. They'll not waste a minute over you, when they find that you're not a purchaser."

There was even a stall for second-hand

theatrical jewellery, with crowns piled up amid coronets, and collars of gold, and glittering stomachers, and jewels that appeared to be very neat glaziers' work indeed. Near the jewels was a stall of lace, with a sad, sallow old woman watching over the dingy bundles. Presently we came upon a stand which displayed a specialité in bridal wreaths; and there was a vivacious party within driving a hard bargain over the orange-blossom, including red or green velvet cushions, on which the bride's wreath was to be finally placed as part of the household gods, and perhaps as a perpetual lesson in duty to the husband. Beyond the bridal stalls, and the second-hand mimic state of the stage, were curtains and carpets, corsets, toys, and, behind, endless stalls of second-hand boots and shoes.

"Now you see, Monsieur Fin-Bec," Madame Barbizon observed, as we drew up before a stall inscribed to the Fiancée of Normandy, "the people who are buying right and left in the avenues and alleys of this immense hall are of all classes. In that bonnet-shop are three or four ladies of good position; the old woman who keeps the lace-stall has only good customers; I have shown you the piles of magnificent dresses, that must have cost five hundred, even to a thousand francs each—well, only persons who go into good society can want these; and as for boots and shoes, you buy them at just one-half the fashionable shop prices. You see how much it is the custom of our saving Parisians to avail themselves of this place, by its vastness. I don't know what poor creatures like your humble servant would do without it."

I noticed one or two young women carrying bowls and other vessels about upon trays.

"Exactly. They are the purveyors of refreshments to the stall-women, who are as sharp in their food economy as any of their customers. You're in the way, dear monsieur."

Behind me a group of three soberly clad ladies were assembled round a saleswoman who was showing all the admirable points of a white embroidered skirt. The length, the grace, the adaptability of it to the figure of the youngest of the three ladies were discussed in the open avenue. I saw it hitched to the young lady's waist, then to the saleswoman's, then measured, and finally thrown aside, while the group drew together to see whether a bargain for it could be struck.

"They will be a quarter of an hour at

that," Madame Barbizon observed, as she led me away. "Buying here is an art; *you* would get no great bargain for instance. They see at once that you are a stranger to the place. It is people who know the ordinary price of the article they are buying, and its relative value here, who win the bargains. The habitués can tell when the saleswomen are very anxious to get rid of their goods. You may study human nature here, monsieur—perhaps an ugly side of it now and then—but an honourable side too. All the buyers we see to-day are respectable people, who will not go one centime beyond their means. They will take no credit—because they know it means dear buying, and so they get the utmost for their money."

"I was very much struck, madame," was my reply, "with an open air sale of furniture—of household goods generally—that takes place, on certain days, on the Place of the Hôtel de Ville, in Brussels. People who have goods to sell, go out into the public square, and get the best price purchasers can afford to give for them. I am quite sure that open markets of this description in great towns would be a boon to the poorer inhabitants. Do away with the auctioneer, and his low followers, who really steal a houseful of furniture in an hour or two, and then go and divide the booty among themselves. Set aside broad open spaces, where the man who has to sell may come in direct contact with the man who has to buy. In England, where the man in difficulties is stripped by legal harpies, by attorney, accountant, sheriff, auctioneer, and the sale gang; where the broker can sweep a house clean at his own price; where the laws that affect the poor are harsher than in any kingdom I have dwelt in; such facilities as you have here for cheap buying and selling, such markets of all description as abound in your cities, would be so many ways to the social salvation of the hardest working race on the face of the earth."

"Permit me to observe," Madame Barbizon interrupted, "that whatever my Cash Temple, as you are pleased to call it, may be, it is not the place for moral reflections on the relative social arrangements of states. Besides, I came here for a certain purpose with which you have nothing to do. I thank you for your company, and——"

"But, madame," I protested, "I cannot think of leaving you in this crowd, and among all these people."

Madame Barbizon laughed, and said, "I

am at home, and this is my way," pointing down one of the crowded side avenues. "Sans adieu!"

And, in a moment, she disappeared behind tiers of blankets and mattresses.

XIV. AND LAST. MADAME FIN-BEC "AT HOME."

MADAME FIN-BEC receives, in the season, every Monday evening. It has been her day for many years. The amiable custom gives her no trouble. A well-furnished tea-table—the tea being the finest in the market, not of the coarse flavour English tea-drinkers usually affect—some dishes of cakes, and the preparations are told. In the winter, sometimes, there is a sip of punch in the ante-chamber; on extra late nights a cup of bouillon before her guests risk the cold air. This is, I have always thought, a happy mean between the feeding bouts of England and the uncheered receptions of Spain. I have often heard the French people charged with a lack of friendship, and I think they are open to it, but they are eminently sociable. Their love of amusement compels them to be often in company. Music, lively conversation, the dressing of a cotillon, make their evening. They look for no supper; they are in the highest spirits with a sirop. Very few of them could afford to receive twenty or thirty people in their rooms every week, if it were necessary to feed the guests. In England, directly you ask people to dance, they have a vision of a supper-table, ices, and champagne. Pleasant accompaniments enough, but not necessities to refined social intercourse.

If English people would only think so, and reduce the present galling expenses of "seeing society," many a family now troubled and crippled by the cost of its social gentilities would have a new era of ease opened to it. There would be no Gunter bills, no crushing wine accounts. And, in addition, the tone of society would be improved. It would be more intellectual than it is. There would be salons as there are in France, where the wit would be the feast; and where a general interchange of ideas among cultivated men and women would be the vivifying enjoyment.

"Your ideas," said one of Madame Fin-Bec's guests to me, "will never grow in the soil of perfidious Albion. I have been in their society, at our embassy and in their own houses. Crowds, refreshments—refreshments, crowds, and their journeys à pas de course, from one mob to another, that is what I saw. Their dinners! The most expensive, over-laden, angular cere-

monies I ever attended. The Chinese are not more formal. The arm that is offered you is as rigid and unsympathetic as the elbows of their chairs. You see the wine warm them a little. They simmer at dessert. You behold every luxury money can buy; but with the exception of a few houses, not that naturalness, that elan, we have in good society. Among the English middle classes, the best-behaviour air is inexpressibly painful."

"I maintain, comtesse," was my reply, "that the stiffness comes from the ceremony that accompanies all social intercourse in England. Their welcome is hearty when a stranger passes within their gates, but he finds ceremony in the heart of the home. The children are formal, and come down from their nursery after dinner painfully brushed; the breakfast table is laid out with the stiffness of a chess-board, and down come the ladies and gentlemen all at one even temper, with one formal salute. This is very difficult for the Frenchman, or the Italian, ay, or even the German to bear."

"Don't talk about it," said the sparkling little countess, who must have suffered agony in such an atmosphere. She shook her shoulders at the mere remembrance of the coldness.

"It is but snow," I went on; "it chills your hands, for a moment, but there is warmth under it."

"Monsieur Fin-Bec," the vivacious Frenchwoman said, turning upon me, and laying the edge of her fan upon my arm, "you will not persuade me that you have any chance of transplanting our order, our economy, our hatred of debt, our faculty of being easily amused, to London. You want people who are in a country where the cookery is au beurre, to establish a kitchen à l'huile. You may talk and write—and who can talk and write with the charm of Monsieur Fin-Bec? but you cannot have a kitchen à l'huile where there is no oil. Leave them to their butter. It is wasteful, it is bad, it is horribly dear and nasty; but it is their way, dear monsieur. Ladies like the baronne are French, pur sang."

The baronne, a middle-aged lady, of great fortune, was advancing towards us. My opponent took her hand, drew her to the sofa beside her, and continued:

"I heard of you this morning, and I want to read Monsieur Fin-Bec a lesson. Our friend Clotilde has been telling me of your morning's work. You have been visiting I don't know how many poor and

sick for your bureau de bienfaisance, and then your own poor. You do too much, chère. Imagine this, Monsieur Fin-Bec, the baronne has been this very day doing the ménage of a poor sick workwoman in the Marais, who is a particular pet of hers. She set going her pot-au-feu, fetched her medicine from the maison de secours, brewed her tisane, made her bed, and put her room thoroughly in order; and then went home exhausted, and dressed for the Bois."

The baronne protested that she had done nothing; but she had done gallantly the work which hundreds of the fine ladies of Paris, and of the provincial towns, perform daily.

"I never found English ladies like the baronne," said the countess, while she held her friend's hand in her lap, and stroked and petted it. Then she held the little hand aloft, and laughing, cried, "There's the hand that makes pancakes, à merveille!"

The baronne was very fond of poor children, and, it seems, often amused herself in making pancakes in the homes of her protégés. While acknowledging the baronne's real benevolence, I protested that her friend was unjust towards English ladies.

"Oh!" cried the countess, "they are bountiful. They are always ready with a handful of money for charity; but you never see them with a ragged child upon their knees, nor teaching how to cook and live cheaply. They don't know how, my dear Monsieur Fin-Bec. They have our fortunes ten times told; so they have no idea of economy. A duchess who carries a parcel, is no duchess to them. And the middle classes follow, like geese on a common."

"Granted," I said. "But, remember, my dear lady, that there is a poor law; that everybody pays a tax to the poor; that there are workhouses which are open to all who are homeless and starving——"

"Don't speak to me"—here the baronne broke in for the first time—"about English workhouses, and the rest of it. People don't die of hunger in our streets. We have our pauvres honteux; but we go out in search of them, and insist upon helping them. The pauvre honteux in London dies. The parish does not look out for him; it is a gain to the parish that he has a grain or two of self-respect left in him. There are two ways of helping, my dear Monsieur Fin-Bec."

I was only too glad to listen to the little baronne, who was a business-like worker at the art of alms, and had experience in a score of good works.

"The way the English poor people are helped, I am told, is the worst. They never teach them what to do in order to help themselves. I made a soupe to-day for one of my poor friends—yes, borrowed her apron and made it, and went out with her to buy the vegetables first; and I reckon that it is better than if I had put a napoleon into her hand. I study every sort of domestic economy—nothing is too little. They wonder where I find all my information, and they laugh at me, but I get them to follow me. I study the market, and make a point of knowing what is cheapest, every time I am going to make my rounds."

"A most excellent practice," I agreed.

"Then I show them how the cheapest is not always the best. Because some cheap foods, you see, are not nutritious. I explain to them, for instance, the value of lentils as compared with turnips."

The countess laughed outright.

"But you ought to have a pulpit, my dear baronne."

"An old chair is the best pulpit for my purpose. As for my information, chère, it is easily got from one's doctor, or a little treatise on the subject. But every one knows that lentils are more nutritious than any other description of pea and bean."

I asked whether my kind visitor did not often find stubborn prejudice and resistance in her way.

"At every step," she answered. "You must have their confidence first. I never begin by preaching at them. If a woman is a slattern, lazy, ill-tempered in the midst of her poverty, I feel my way. The first time, I touch upon the fatigue I have myself undergone; the number of stairs I have climbed, et cetera. I put one or two of the chairs in order against the walls, with a gentle observation that they are out of place. I reprove the mother through the children; tell them that ill-temper brings wrinkles, and so on. I give a plain frock to one of the girls, together with a lesson on neatness and cleanliness; but I never venture to lecture the mother. No, no; through kindness to the children I make her my friend. One day I find the room scrubbed, and the chairs dusted, and the atmosphere as fresh as it is on the Boulevards. But I make no remark on the change. I go on with my little lessons. The bits of help I bring always give me texts for a useful word or two, but never for a sermon. But my difficulty is with the men. I fear, Monsieur Fin-Bec, you are mauvais sujets, one and all."

The countess threw in her hearty acquies-

cence. "Every creature," she said, "who wears a moustache is wicked; there is no use discussing it. I dare say, my dear baronne, you find the husbands of these poor women spending half the money that should go to the comfort of the family, and——"

"Half!" the enthusiastic little baronne exclaimed. "Many wives would be very content with half. The monsters will spend two-thirds of their week's earnings on Sunday and Monday; and some of them never get back to the workshop before Wednesday morning. The better workmen the worst fathers and husbands, that is the shocking part of it."

"So that," I interrupted, "if it were not for the good management of the women in their households, thousands of families would be starving."

"You may say that, monsieur; and where there is real suffering, even with a brutal, cabaret-haunting husband, the wife is wanting, too, in some quality."

"And now," said I, "I am going to ask you a serious question. Since you had some experience of London while the baron was secretary to the embassy, why is London misery acuter and more widely spread than ours?"

"I leave you," the countess interposed; "you are too learned in the matter for me. Take my place, Monsieur Fin-Bec. I shall go in quest of some subjects for my cotillon."

The baronne was convinced it was, in the first place, the drunken habits of the husbands, and, in the second place, the utter helplessness of the wives. "Monsieur, they know nothing; they are as helpless as the ragged little children crawling upon the floor. They will scrape a little coal together, and burn a fire in the hottest days of the summer. But they are only, poor things, like the rest of their countrywomen. If we poor French ladies were as careless and expensive in our houses as our British sisters are, we should soon ruin ourselves, and our children would not get a sou of dowry."

"Your experience agrees," I said, "with that of the comtesse."

"We used to compare our observations in London. We talked very much about it; but I am sure we made no impression."

"If you could not," was my remark, "what hope can I have?"

"How foolish! Your little papers will talk to hundreds and thousands. The English people are not fools, understand, Monsieur Fin-Bec."

"My point," I replied, "is that they are the people of the best common sense in the world; that they love money; that they are practical; and, therefore, that it is only necessary to show them the daily folly of which they are guilty in their homes to make them reform. You see, madame, it has been proved by their own learned men, who have drawn up scientific dietaries (far richer than ours for our prisons and poor), that an adult can be supplied with sufficient food to repair and keep in healthy vigour the adult human frame, at something between two shillings and three shillings a week. A woman requires one-tenth less than a man; and we may take children at half. This calculation is based on English food and English cookery."

"Our methods would reduce the cost."

"A good thirty per cent. Reduce the cost this thirty per cent, and then spread among the lower classes of labourers' wives a series of economical dietaries priced, and teach them how to prepare them."

"It would be excellent; it would be better than all the blanket distributions, monsieur, if it could be done. But try your reform upon the educated, the fashionable first; for the English people will only follow their superiors."

"Everybody tells me this," I sharply answered. "I have done so, and they will not listen. They——"

"Persevere," the baronne said, with solemnity; then taking my arm, she added, breaking into a smile, "but, pardon, I have promised to help Madame Fin-Bec at the tea-table. She has the most delicious tea in the world."

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER IV. THE NAGLES AT CHURCH.

THE "hole" to which Mr. Nagle had made such contemptuous allusion was an obscure little town in Wales, into which the family had been driven, as it were, by stress of weather. It was a rude spot, and a music-master is about as much wanted in such places as he would be at some newly found gold diggings. No one cares to learn music, even were it given at sixpence a lesson.

This "miserable bog," as he was fond of calling it, did not even afford subsistence to an organist, as the population were chiefly dissenters, and relied on their own

unaided voices. As for Corinna, her charms of person and voice were equally thrown away. There was no one to admire. She, indeed, with a venerable "Broadwood" of angular build, and of buzzing interior sounds—that in forte passages rose into a jangle—were the only treasures and two most valuable pieces of property possessed by the family. "The Broadwood," and "my girl Corinna," were the words oftenest in Mr. Nagle's mouth. In all their distresses—and they had had many—the faithful instrument had always been retained, and no matter how small their humble apartments, "the Broadwood" was somehow hoisted up the narrow stairs: though once or twice it had been in sore peril from distrait. The legend ran that the great Braham had once carelessly strummed upon its keys, now grown as yellow as an old set of teeth, the first rude outlines of "Twas in Trafalgar's Bay!—since become immortal. Was it wonderful that this relic should be regarded with veneration, or that like "my daughter and my ducats," which the Jew was so concerned about, Mr. Nagle should have coupled "my daughter and my piano!"

Mr. Nagle boasted himself of a gentlemanly family though after a hazy fashion. It was understood he was connected with certain "Nagles in the North," who had behaved scandalously to this member of their house, though it must be said in justice to him that both statements were always made for him, and that beyond sad movements of his eyes, and significant shakings of his head, no authority on his side could be quoted. The impression left was that he preferred "to wipe out the past," and suffer the consequences of his original error, whatever it was. Another assumption was that he had whilom trod the boards in English opera, and it was believed, had played with the enchanting Mrs. Wood, though some affirmed that he had done no more than carry a white night-gown as second Druid, and had been merely addressed collectively by the fair singer. This little biography may be completed by the fact, that the lady he married enjoyed tolerable practice at Brighton as lady professor of singing, with shadowy expectations from a relation in trade, who, however, was glad to gain a reputation for just severity by declaring she should not have a sixpence of his money for marrying a fellow that painted his face and bellowed from the stage. Such is a little sketch of the previous history of Mr. and Mrs. Braham Nagle.

Their daughter, as may have been guessed, was a practical girl enough; but with a

certain ambition, and an undeveloped romance which no one would have suspected. In all the shifts to which their life had exposed them, she had always shown a dignity, and even haughtiness, as though she were looking to some stage of life where she would be free from the "eternal exercises," and "the Broadwood." Yet she did not disdain the profession to which her father, in many a family council, destined her—both father and mother fondly looking forward to a proud moment when she was to come out in, say, The Bohemian Girl; or, as the Italian Opera recruited its ranks from English districts, why should she not belong to the great cage of singers, and come forth at Covent Garden as Signora Naglioni? Her voice would fill that vast house as effectively as that of any of "the Italian squad;" her bell-like organ would ring through that vast enclosure. To this glorious apotheosis Braham Nagle ever fondly looked, though he had as yet taken no serious steps in the direction. "Wait till she ripens," he would say; "her voice wants mellowing, and mellowing," two delightfully juicy words to which he was partial.

The following morning was Sunday, and the Nagle family set forth to attend church, a spiky structure with a moist clayey air, and dappled over in diaper patterns of white and black bricks. It can hardly be said that Mr. Nagle came for devotional purposes, his attention being absorbed by a rite that was going on at the other end of the church, namely, the performance on the organ, which "old Humphries" was handling. The demeanour of Mr. Nagle was infinitely scornful. At first he would look back with curiosity, as though he were disturbed from his devotions by something strange going on at that end of the building. Then he seemed to grow certain that something was wrong—something almost barbarous. His expressive face conveyed all this by a certain pantomime—elevation of the eye-brows, pitying smile, shaking of head, then a resolute but vain attempt to fix his attention on his devotions. At times he would give a violent start or shiver as though his nerves were jarred by the execrable performance. Some were amused by these antics, but many more were impressed, and began presently to look round and shiver likewise; and before the day was over agreed at the Sunday dinner that old Humphries was playing execrably, was past his work, and that having subscribed so much for the new church, they ought to have a suitable performer.

There were other persons who came to that service for purposes very different from that of following the rites that were going forward. The music-master's handsome daughter, though not over "stylish" in her dress, was still as brilliant as gay ribbons, selected in accordance with the rather theatrical taste of her mother, could make her. From the next pew a pair of admiring eyes wandered in contemplation of her beauties. Young Duke, indeed, strayed from his devotions on this occasion; nay, it is to be feared, was actually led to the new brick church for some end wholly different to that of devotion. When the congregation came out he at once joined them, and they all walked home together to the Crescent, where Mr. Nagle insisted that his friend should honour them by taking a share of their "crust and rind of cheese," otherwise of luncheon. The young man was delighted. He looked with veneration on the modest room where his divinity was enshrined, and above all on the sacred instrument, the Broadwood. On the other hand, the homage that was paid to him was quite touching. Every Nagle face was turned to him like so many sunflowers, watching every motion, smiling in anticipation, chorusing in semitones at all he said. This situation is always very seductive and even fascinating for a young man who has chiefly associated with men. It is a new revelation; for it is the new discovery of the preciousness of one's own gifts, hitherto rather slighted in the bosom of one's family. Then Mr. Nagle went over to the instrument, and lifted the attenuated and lath-like flaps which contrasted with the solid and handsome beams of modern instruments, and insisted on having a private audition of Mr. Duke's vocal powers.

"Just, now, let us do a little of the *Dore-mi-fa-sol!*" and the old instrument gave forth from its yellow jaws what seemed a distant and jangling peal of cracked bells.

The youth was a little shy at first, but led on gradually by the applause of the bystanders, was presently giving forth those prolonged calls by which the human voice is supposed to be best exercised. The music-master led him carefully, his eyes blinking, his mouth inviting the notes, the whole family quite in ecstasy.

"It is curious," said Mr. Nagle, stopping short, "it's quite the same *Tamber*"—it may be supposed that the word in Mr. Nagle's mind at this juncture was *timbre*—"*as Spolio's*, the man that came out

at the King's Theatre. Beat Rubini into fits—afterwards cracked on his high C. Terrible, sir, terrible! I know it for a fact from Grimani and others, that no less than half an octave was grafted on, sir, to his register. I did the same with Miss Wilkinson—forced—developed—squeezed—soothed—when that girl left me she had three notes more than when she came. I made her a present of those three notes! Of course, no thanks. As for your organ, my dear Mr. Duke, we could fertilise it in the most surprising manner. I could engage, mind you, to lift it two within a month!"

The young man looked delighted.

"They never seemed to care much for my musical gifts at home," he said; "and to tell you the truth, I never considered the matter much; but if you really think that I have a voice, I wish you would take it in hand. My father and mother go away to-morrow: but I shall stay on here for some time. I find it a very pleasant place."

The family interchanged glances. This had been the rock ahead, and had caused Mr. and Mrs. B. Nagle some anxious moments' discussion—Lady Duke appearing to be a person likely to act with promptness and vigour, and exceedingly dangerous to encounter. Here she was retiring from the scene, either unconscious of danger, or, more probably, overpowered by the determination of the young man. Corinna's eyes sparkled, and her handsome lips took the shape of a smile.

"I was so afraid that you were going away," she said.

Here Mr. Nagle became absorbed in some perverse harmonies which *would* not resolve themselves at once, and which, like restive horses, he was determined to force into doing their duty. His daughter and her admirer strayed over to the window, while Mrs. Nagle became absorbed in papa's interesting struggle.

Later, over "the rind of cheese and crust," it was arranged that the lessons should begin on the morrow.

"My time," said Mr. Nagle, frankly, "is with me, money. Unhappily, so it is" (unhappily, so it wasn't). "I would dispense such little knowledge as I have, in your case, Mr. Duke, without any *Ee-m-lewmintary* views"—one of our professor's rich words—"but we will put it as low as we can——"

"My dear sir," said the young man, "pray don't speak in that way. I must insist on being placed on the same footing with your other pupils. I insist."

"Well, well, be it so. We'll put it at, say, half a geeney a lesson," an arrangement which however did not answer to the request of being placed on the same footing with the other pupils. Mr. Nagle then took out a rather greasy little memorandum book and searched through various pages of close writing, affecting to record the crowded engagements of the coming week. "Monday—two. No, won't do. Tuesday—four—six; hardly, though we could put her off. Wednesday—no we must manage Monday somehow. There," added Mr. Nagle, in desperation at the inconvenient crush, "let us say Monday—at twelve. You must have your appointment for that hour."

In this way it was arranged. In this way, too, began that extraordinary attachment of young Duke's—"infatuation" it was presently called—which soon began to be the talk of Brickford.

CHAPTER V. JACK AND BILL.

HONEST Bill Gardiner saw what was going on; and in a hearty, noisy way expressed his delight and his intention to forward it in every way.

"She's a fine, noble girl," he said, "and fit to be a lady." And when his wife would temperately murmur something about disparity of station, William Gardiner burst into one of his loud laughs, and declared seriously that good looks and good behaviour were now-a-days preferred to mere pedigree. Braham Nagle was a good fellow, and they must ask him to dine the next time, and not have him coming sneaking in in the evening like a fiddler coming to play at a ball. As a matter of course he must "form the voices" of the Pollys, Lucys, and Marys of his family, who were, indeed, already under instruction at the hands of Miss Parker, the governess; and he was pressing his brother Jack to secure Mr. Nagle's musical services.

"Have Nagle," he would say to every one; "have Nagle at once, if you want style, finish, and the true touch. Sit at the feet of Braham. By the way, I'll tell you as good a thing as ever you heard about Braham, which Nagle told us the other night."

Bill Gardiner, indeed, was always full of these good stories, which he told boisterously and noisily. They were mostly in a broad, low comedy style, and accompanied by such roars of enjoyment that it was impossible for the listener not to join. It may be said, however, that his musical taste did not keep pace with this hearty

enjoyment; like many other enthusiastic people he made two mistakes: he mistook pantomime for singing, and supposed that the recitation of familiar words was the same thing as singing. Therefore, he assumed that Mr. Nagle's performance of Sally in our Alley was one of the most exquisite, refined, and touching things in the history of music.

These things he impressed on his brother, "Jack the parson," as he was familiarly called in Brickford, to distinguish him. It was pleasant to see the two brothers together every Saturday taking their long walk in the suburbs among the brick-pits and lime-kilns, Bill's arm round his brother's in an affectionate fashion, whilst its owner poured out stories and questions, and made the air ring with loud laughter. Never was there such an affectionate pair. They suggested two enthusiastic young college friends rather than such elderly sages.

During these walks Bill impetuously settled all the Nagle affairs. Nagle must be the new organist; Nagle must give lessons to the parish all round; Nagle's daughter must marry that young spark. This wholesale adoption of a comparative stranger may seem a little surprising, but this was "the way" of this good-natured fellow, who in his time had gone about with many a goose, which he puffed and praised to his friends as an undoubted swan.

"I say, Jack," said Bill, on one walk, as he was dragging his brother along, "we must get Old Doughty, when he next comes down, to hear Miss Corinna. We must make the old boy useful. He knows all the musical swells and pundits, has Costa and Company to his scraping parties at Warwick-street. We'll get introductions from him, and have Miss Corinna brought out at St. James's Hall, my boy!"

This, for our ardent friend, was the grand theatre of success, and to come out at that well-known place of exhibition, either as lecturer, Ethiopian, conjuror, singer, or panoramist, was to have secured fame. This idea was founded on his own partiality for the place, as whenever he went up to town he always repaired to this temple of amusement, and returned enchanted, giving his family a vivid rehearsal of all he had seen and heard, whether Ethiopian or necromantic. The dining-room at his house often re-echoed with his burst of laughter as he repeated the jests and repartees of that uncommonly diverting fellow Jim Stackney, "one of the most humorous beggars you ever heard," and so on. There was certainly a little inconsis-

tency in his views with regard to Corinna, supposing that he really hoped to see her appear on this platform; for he had announced already that all his energies, with those of his friends, were to be bent towards securing the young admirer for her in lawful marriage. As Old Doughty fills a rather important part in this narrative, at this stage some attention must be devoted to him and to his condition.

CHAPTER VI. OLD DOUGHTY.

OLD DOUGHTY, were his family documents, certificates, &c., duly scrutinised, would be found to be not so very old after all. He was, in fact, neither grey nor stooped, and not very old-fashioned in dress or manner, but more old and "dry" in mind than in body; a cold, grey-eyed bachelor, who lived by himself, and at a club. He was a retired civil servant, and had a pension of four hundred a year. He disliked young men, and was devoted to music; and from his rooms in Warwick-street, Pimlico, were heard at midnight the hurried gallopings of fiddle-bows and the horny agonies of the violoncello, when the performer was giving way to expression. The quartettos of Mozart and Haydn were thus interpreted, the host at times taking the viola, though his fingers were weak and his tone quavering. He was certainly a true amateur, and all the money he could spare went for operas, chamber music, and concerts, his face being familiar to all musical habitués. His hair was thin, a few locks of great length being brushed over his poll, and trained, like thin skeins of silk, with some adhesive mixture, neatly over the baldness. He was about fifty-five, wiry and well preserved; his back showed a curious cragginess or sharpness at the shoulders, with a corresponding spareness at the small of the back. Though he wore a modern coat, it always would assume a certain muffler-like "highness" about the collar. He had a nervous fidgety manner, and his cold grey eye would roll with uneasiness on any one who tried to be free or friendly with him. As to his character, some said he was stingy, yet the "fiddlers" who came to play in Warwick-street found at the end of the night a handsome and liberal supper, with champagne, and other delicacies, laid out for them. He was sour and crabbed, yet these "fiddling gentry," as the landlady called them, declared he was pleasant, jovial even, and kindly.

At intervals he came down to Brickford

for change of air, for he lived with the utmost regularity. The brothers Gardiner, especially Will, tried hard to be friends with him; but he seemed to shiver under the boisterous blasts of Will's merriment, while the ladies of both families could not conceal their amusement and even contempt at his odd ways. He was not old enough, you see, to have the pleasant and softened compatibility of the official elderly relation; nor was he young enough to fall in with the ideas of an agreeable cousin. Hence, they were all "shy" of him. He came once or twice to dine, literally as overpowered by the obstreperous pressing of the impetuous Will, as though he had been seized, bound, and brought away to the dinner-table, but he did not make a favourable impression. He had a small, clear, sharp voice, and his comments on the rallying speeches of the ladies were cold, distrustful, and even sarcastic. He was pronounced to be "a curmudgeon," and that he had "snarled" and "yapped" all through dinner. When one of the girls went to the piano, he openly expressed his disapproval.

"She is wasting time," he said, "and desecrating a noble art. What she does is no more than learning her steps from the dancing-master. Where there is no natural taste, it is cruelty to the child, who might learn something that she could really excel in. I know it seems ungracious to tell you this; but you said I was a judge, and insisted on having my opinion."

On this we may be sure he was voted a downright bear, without manners or breeding. "After all, he had really little or nothing to go on. Any one that saw his den in Warwick-street would say that, and to know a few fiddlers and hungry scrapers, was easy enough in all conscience."

Notwithstanding this, and other unsatisfactory attempts at cultivation, the male Gardiners did not give him up. Indeed there was a curious, wistful look in his face, that appealed, as it were, for sympathy, and suggested some old suffering. When it was insisted that he *must* hear Corinna, and encourage her with due praise, he said in his sour way:

"None of you were pleased when I last gave my opinion. I really have no opinions, and can give none. If I had any I should keep them to myself."

"But, hang it, Doughty, a poor girl, who wants to work for her family. Are we to do nothing for our fellow-creatures?"

"Not in music; it is too sacred a thing to be playing tricks with and recommend-

ing impostors. I suppose you may give characters to servants who are robbers and drunkards; it seems there is no harm in that. But for Heaven's sake let us keep clear of that in MUSIC."

"You are a very odd creature, Doughty," was his relative's complimentary remark, and on that dropped the subject. Afterwards, as he came but rarely, the intercourse between him and the family was but of a slender description. He continued his life, and they continued theirs. But at the time this story commences, Mr. Doughty had come down to Brickford and had brought his favourite "genuine Guarnierius" (an article of which the world seems to be full) to comfort his leisure moments.

CHAPTER VII. "THE DYING SWAN."

THINGS were promising very fairly for Mr. Braham Nagle in Brickford. He began to think of a sort of Orphean power of stirring, if not the stones of the place, at least the huge masses of brick, as he walked. The revived "Harmonic Matinées," with arrangement for tickets, at two geeneys the course of twelve, and a reduction on family tickets; though two geeneys seemed a ridiculous price considering the prospects of the family; "Mud cheap, mud cheap, sir," he said contemptuously to the imaginary listener who attended him in such discussions. "I'm not going to do grinders' work now. It's high time to stop all that. I've let myself down too much. No, no! that must come to an end. I've given myself and my 'method,' mud cheap, mud cheap, sir!" This was a favourite expression of the music-master's.

And in truth things were promising well for the family. Various proprietors of the chimneys and the vast mills of brick were driven, by the overpowering importunities of Bill Gardiner, to engage so famous a professor for their children, and very soon he was assuming the air of an overworked cabinet minister, striving to make his engagements compatible with each other. He had established commercial relations with the one music-shop of the place, which did but a meagre business, and where he was received with profound homage. Here he purchased those ballads which he brought to his pupils, and on which he received "the usual allowance;" but it must be said that there was no ballad in the wide domains of human composition which so satisfactorily answered the purposes of instruction, as "a little thing of his

own," which bore the title of *The Dying Swan*—the title-page of which, being characteristic of the man, and, indeed, of many other men, may be inserted here:

Sung at the Harmonic Matinées.

THE DYING SWAN!

Words by SIMPLICIA. The Music, composed and dedicated to his pupil, MRS. HOBSON COBB, by

BRAHAM NAGLE,

Founder and Director of the Harmonic Matinées,
Author of the Method for the Voice, &c.

Every new pupil was expected to make him or herself master, or mistress, of this lyric; and it must be said that the sale of the work was entirely in this enforced direction. A number of copies were therefore ordered down to meet the anticipated demand. The general appearance of this chef-d'œuvre at various houses in a small district, produced rather a monotony—swans, as Bill Gardiner remarked, dying about in every direction.

But for the gallant young Alfred Duke, when had Mr. Nagle a more eager pupil, or one that followed the Doremifa with such enthusiasm? The truth was, it became not so much a series of lessons as one long lesson. Say that the hour fixed was two o'clock. Mr. Duke would arrive about one, and the professor would drop in about half-past two, harassed by the multiplicity of engagements.

"Hunted, sir, hunted!" he would exclaim. "I envy the cab-horse, and would change with him this moment. My dear Mr. Duke," he added, solemnly, "take this warning: break stones, sweep the mud in the streets, pick oakum, go down and walk the sewers, but never embrace tuition as a profession!" Which, as addressed to the young gentleman, might seem a superfluous warning. "It's heart-breaking. Not for the work, but for the character of the work. There are girls brought to me, sir, by their mothers, poor ignorant creatures, with no more voice than the chimney-pot on that house. I suppose they expect me to find them voices! I can't lend myself to the imposture; there are plenty of hacks about ready for jobs of that kind. I can't do it, sir."

Actuated by this fine feeling for his art, Mr. Nagle would assume a worn and persecuted air, and then changing to a cheerful tone, would exclaim:

"Now for our friend Doremifa."

The lesson would continue until about four or five, and indeed could scarcely be styled a lesson, there was so much conversation intermixed with the instruction.

Generally the master was not present at all; nevertheless, the effect on all parties was as though a lesson *had* been given.

Corinna's rich voice was often heard during these occasions.

"Oh! I could listen to your singing for ever," would say the young man; "there is a tenderness and tremulousness that goes to the heart. Sing that, *When through Life*, again. That was one of the first songs I ever heard you sing."

"How well I remember that night," said Corinna, her hands dropping from the piano. "I was so terribly nervous. All those strange faces looking so coldly——"

"Not mine, surely. I was drinking in every note. But, of course, you never noticed me."

"Yes, I did, indeed I did. Yours was the only one! You seemed to feel for me, and I was wondering who you were."

"And what did you think I was? Some coxcomb, I dare say——"

"No, no, no," she answered, eagerly. "You seemed to me—but I don't know how to say it—to have sympathy. Yours was the only face in that crowd that I felt—you understand—was with me."

Now there will be many who will consider this young lady to have been a low, artful young creature, angling according to her lights, in an inartistic way, for a young man superior to her in station, and doing her part with goodwill in this little conspiracy for entrapping a young fellow. Yet this would be an unfair judgment. She was really in love with this gentleman, and felt all the emotions which she so naïvely expressed. After all, there is no such prodigious harm in struggling to secure some one in a higher station, and the same struggle is repeated in all ranks. As in revolutions, it is success that constitutes the legality.

The young man was, indeed, for the time, hopelessly entangled. There was something even romantic in her position—a candidate for the stage, and votary of that charming art where all is aristocracy—the queen of song—the *HEROINE*! Even the surroundings were lit with some of that radiance. Braham Nagle, under less paternal conditions, would have been contemptuously pronounced a mere vulgar "pump," and all his fine speeches so much twaddle. The homage of the family

would have been "low adulation." But the celestial moonlight illuminated all! Shall it be confessed there was another motive working, of which nearly all the parties concerned were unconscious, which was the young gentleman's vanity? In time all these rapturous commendations began to bring conviction. Were a stammerer assured, a thousand times assured by many voices that he was a consummate orator, he would at last begin to put faith in it; while the plainest of women might even more readily be convinced that she was but an hour or so's time behind the official beauty. It was amusing to see how soon Mr. Alfred came to give forth his rather rude notes with a bold confidence, to listen critically, and himself to vouchsafe criticisms which were received with astonishment and delight. They were charming people, indeed, as he repeated with authority to his friends; and when any joking remark was made on Mr. Nagle's mind and manners, he put it by, or put it down with a grave authority, as though he were entitled to speak, and was in the family confidence.

"Mr. Nagle," he said, "was a man who had seen a great deal of life, and knew more than people imagined. Few men had more experience, or had been trained in a better school; he had been knocking about with Braham, Grimani, and all that cultivated school. He had had many remarkable pupils; was altogether a remarkable man." People wondered as they heard this justification, and wondered more as they saw the confidential relations of the parties; but at the same time it must be said that the young man had a certain reserve, and Mr. Nagle never felt as much at ease with him as he could have wished.

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"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 214. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE DOG AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER XXXIII. NOTICE TO QUIT.

WE drank tea with Lady Lorrimer. Mamma continued very silent, and I think she had been crying in her room.

"They can't tell me here whether Harry has arrived or not," said Lady Lorrimer. "He might have returned by the Dardale-road, and if so, he would not have passed through Golden Friars, so it is doubtful. But I'm pretty sure that was he."

"I wish I were sure of that," said mamma.

"Well, I don't know," said Lady Lorrimer, "what to advise. I was just going to say it might be a wise thing if you were to make up your mind to see him, and to beard the lion in his den."

"No," said mamma; "if you mean, to meet him and speak to him, I could not do that. I shall never see him again—nothing but pain could come of it; and he would not see me, and he ought not to see me; and he ought not to forgive me—never!"

"Well, dear, I can't deny it, you did use him very ill. And he is, and always was, a fierce and implacable enemy," answered Lady Lorrimer. "I fancied, perhaps, if he did see you, the old chord might be touched again, and yield something of its old tone on an ear saddened by time. But I dare say you are right. It was a Quixotic inspiration, and might have led to disaster; more probably, indeed, than to victory."

"I am quite sure of that—in fact, I know it," said mamma.

And there followed a silence.

"I sometimes think, Mabel—I was thinking so all this evening," said Lady Lorrimer, "it might have been happier for

us if we had never left this lonely place. We might have been happier if we had been born under harder conditions; the power of doing what pleases us best leads us so often into sorrow."

Another silence followed. Mamma was looking over her shoulder, sadly, through the window at the familiar view of lake and mountain, indolently listening.

"I regret it, and I don't regret it," continued Lady Lorrimer; "if I could go back again into my early self—I wish I could—but the artificial life so perverts and enervates one, I hardly know, honestly, what I wish. I only know there is regret enough to make me discontented, and I think I should have been a great deal happier if I had been compelled to stay at Golden Friars, and had never passed beyond the mountains that surround us here. I have not so long as you to live, Mabel, and I'm glad of it. I am not quite so much of a Sadducee as you used to think me, and I hope there may be a happier world for us all. And, now that I have ended my hominy, as they call such long speeches in this country, will you, dear Ethel, give me a cup of tea?"

Lady Lorrimer and I talked. I was curious about some of the places and ruins I had seen, and asked questions, which it seemed to delight her to answer. It is a region abounding in stories strange and marvellous, family traditions, and legends of every kind.

"I think," said mamma, à propos des bottes, "if he has returned they are sure to know in the town before ten to-night. Would you mind asking again by-and-bye?"

"You mean about Harry Rokestone?"

"Yes."

"I will. I'll make out all about him."

We saw his castle to-day," she continued, turning to me. "Our not knowing whether he was there or not made it a very interesting contemplation. You remember the short speech Sheridan wrote to introduce Kelly's song at Drury Lane—'There stands my Matilda's cottage! She must be in it or else out of it?'"

Again mamma dropped out, and the conversation was maintained by Lady Lorrimer and myself, and in a little while mamma took her leave, complaining of a headache; and our kinswoman begged that I would remain for an hour or so, to keep her company.

When mamma had bid her good-night, and was gone, the door being shut, Lady Lorrimer laughed, and said:

"Now, tell me truly, don't you think if your papa had been with us to-day in the boat, and seen the change that took place in your mamma's looks and spirits from the moment she saw Dorracleugh, and the tall man who stood on the rock, down to the hour of her headache and early good-night, he would have been a little jealous?"

I did not quite know whether she was joking or serious, and I fancy there was some puzzle in my face as I answered:

"But it can't be that she liked Sir Harry Rokestone; she is awfully afraid of him—that is the reason, I'm sure, she was so put out. She never liked him."

"Don't be too sure of that, little woman," she answered gaily.

"Do you really think mamma liked him? Why, she was in love with papa."

"No, it was nothing so deep," said Lady Lorrimer; "she did not love your papa; it was a violent whim, and if she had been left just five weeks to think, she would have returned to Rokestone."

"But there can be no sentiment remaining still," I remarked. "Sir Harry Rokestone is an old man!"

"Yes, he is an old man; he is, let me see, he's fifty-six. And she did choose to marry your papa. But I'm sure she thinks she made a great mistake. I am very sure she thinks that, with all his faults, Rokestone was the more loveable man, the better man, the truer. He would have taken good care of her. I don't know any one point in which he was your papa's inferior, and there are fifty in which he was immeasurably his superior. He was a handsomer man, if that is worth anything. I think I never saw so handsome a man in his peculiar style. You think me a very odd

old woman to tell you my opinion of your father so frankly; but I am speaking as your mamma's friend and kinswoman, and I say your papa has not used her well. He is good-humoured, and has good spirits, and he has some good nature, quite subordinated to his selfishness. And those qualities, so far as I know, complete the master-roll of his virtues. But he has made her, in no respect, a good husband. In some a very bad one. And he employs half a dozen attorneys, to whom he commits his business at random, and he is too indolent to look after anything. Of course he's robbed, and everything at sixes and sevens; and he has got your mamma to take legal steps to make away with her money for his own purposes; and the foolish child, the merest simpleton in money matters, does everything he bids her; and I really believe she has left herself without a guinea. I don't like him; no one could who likes *her*. Poor, dear Mabel, she wants energy; I never knew a woman with so little will. She never showed any but once, and that was when she did a foolish thing, and married your father."

"And did Sir Harry Rokestone like mamma very much?" I asked.

"He was madly in love with her, and when she married your papa, he wanted to shoot him. I think he was, without any metaphor, very nearly out of his mind. He has been a sort of anchorite ever since. His money is of no use to him. He is a bitter and eccentric old man."

"And he can injure papa now?"

"So I'm told. Your papa thinks so; and he seldom takes the trouble to be alarmed about any danger three or four months distant."

Then, to my disappointment and, also, my relief, that subject dropped. It had interested and pained me; and sometimes I felt that it was scarcely right that I should hear all she was saying, without taking up the cudgels for papa.

Now, with great animation she told me her recollections of her girlish days here at Golden Friars, when the old gentry were such bores and humorists, as are no longer to be met with anywhere. And as she made me laugh at these recitals, her maid, whom she had sent down to "the bar" to make an inquiry, returned, and told her something in an undertone.

As soon as she was gone, Lady Lorrimer said:

"Yes, it is quite true. Tell your mamma that Harry Rokestone is at Dorracleugh."

She became thoughtful. Perhaps she was rehearsing mentally the mediatory conference she had undertaken.

We had not much more conversation that night: and we soon parted with a very affectionate good-night. My room adjoined mamma's, and finding that she was not yet asleep, I went in and gave her Lady Lorrimer's message. Mamma changed colour, and raised herself suddenly on her elbow, looking in my face.

"Very well, dear," said she, a little flurried. "We must leave this to-morrow morning."

CHAPTER XXXIV. SIR HARRY'S ANSWER.

ABOUT eleven o'clock next morning our chaise was at the door of the George and Dragon. We had been waiting with our bonnets on to say good-bye to Lady Lorrimer.

I have seen two or three places in my life to which my affections were drawn at first sight, and this was one of them. I was standing at the window, looking my last at this beautiful scene. Mamma was restless and impatient. I knew she was uneasy lest some accident should bring Sir Harry Rokestone to the door, before we had set out upon our journey.

At length Lady Lorrimer's foreign maid came to tell us that milady wished to see us now.

Accordingly we followed the maid, who softly announced us.

The room was darkened; only one gleam, through a little opening in the far shutter, touched the curtains of her bed, showing the old-fashioned chintz pattern, like a transparency, through the faded lining. She was no longer the gay Lady Lorrimer of the evening before. She was sitting up among her pillows, nearly in the dark, and the most melancholy whimpering voice you can imagine came through the gloom from among the curtains.

"Is my sweet Ethel there, also?" she asked, when she had kissed mamma. "Oh, that's right; I should not have been happy if I had not bid you good-bye. Give me your hand, darling; and so you are going, Mabel. I'm sorry you go so soon, but perhaps you are right; I think you are; it would not do, perhaps, to meet; I'll do what I can; and write to tell you how I succeed."

Mamma thanked and kissed her again.

"I'm not so well as people think, dear, nor as I wish to think myself. We may not meet for a long time; and I wish to tell

you, Mabel—I wish to tell you both—that I won't leave you dependent on that reckless creature, Francis Ware. I want you two to be safe. I have none but you left me to love on earth." Here poor Lady Lorrimer began to cry. "Whenever I write to you, you must come to me; don't let anything prevent you; I'm so weak; I want to leave you both very well, and I intend to put it out of my power to change it—who's that at the door? Just open it, Ethel, dear child, and see if any one is there—my maid I mean—you can say you dropped your handkerchief—hush."

There was no one in the lobby.

"Shut it quietly, dear; I'll do what I say—don't thank me—don't say a word about it to any one, and if you mention it to Francis Ware, charge him to tell no one else. There, dears, both, don't stay longer. God bless you. Go, go, God bless you."

And, with these words, having kissed us both very fondly, she dismissed us.

Mamma ran down, and out to the carriage very quickly, and sat back as far as she could at the far side. I followed, and all being ready, in a minute more we were driving swiftly from the George and Dragon, and soon town, lake, forest, and distant fells were hidden from view by the precipitous sides of the savage gorge, through which the road winds its upward way.

Our drive into Golden Friars had been a silent one, and so was our drive from it, though from different causes.

I was thinking over our odd interview with poor Lady Lorrimer. In what a low nervous state she seemed, and how affectionately she spoke!

I had no inquisitive tendencies, and I was just at the age when people take the future for granted. No sordid speculations therefore, I can honestly say, were busy with my brain.

We were to have stayed at least ten days at Golden Friars, and here we were flying from it before two days were spent. All our plans were upset by the blight of Sir Harry Rokestone's arrival at least a fortnight before the date of his usual visit, just as Napoleon's Russian calculations were spoilt by the famous early winter of 1812. I was vexed in my way. I should not have been sorry to hear that he been well ducked in the lake. Mamma was vexed in her own way, also, when about an hour after, she escaped from the thoughts that agitated her at first, and descended to her ordinary level. A gap of more than a week was

made in her series of visits. What was to be done with it?

"Where are we going, mamma?" I asked, innocently enough.

"Nowhere—everywhere. To Chester," she answered, presently.

"And where then?" I asked.

"Why do you ask questions that I can't answer? Why should you like to make me more miserable than I am? Everything is thrown into confusion. I'm sure I don't know the least. I have no plans. I literally don't know where we are to lay our heads to-night. There's no one to take care of us. As usual, whenever I want assistance, there's none to be had, and my maid is so utterly helpless, and your papa in town. I only know that I'm not strong enough for this kind of thing; you can write to your papa, when we come to Chester. We shan't see him for Heaven knows how long; he may have left London by this time; and he'll write to Golden Friars; and now that I think of it—oh, how am I to live through all this!—I forgot to tell the people there where to send our letters. Oh dear, oh dear, it is such a muddle. And I could not have told them, literally, for I don't know where we are going. We had better just stay at Chester till he comes, whenever that may be; and I really could just lie down and cry."

I was glad we were to ourselves, for mamma's looks and tones were so utterly despairing, that in a railway carriage we should have made quite an excitement.

In such matters mamma was very easy to persuade by any one who would take the trouble of thinking on themselves, and she consented to come to Malory instead; and there, accordingly, we arrived next day, much to the surprise of Rebecca Torkill, who received us with a very glad welcome, solemnised a little by a house-keeper's responsibilities.

Mamma enjoyed her simple life here wonderfully, more, a great deal, than I had ventured to hope. She seemed to me naturally made for a rural life, though fate had consigned her to a town one. She reminded me of the German prince mentioned in Tom Moore's journal, who had a great taste for navigation, but whose principality unfortunately was inland.

Papa did not arrive until the day before that fixed for his and mamma's visit to Dromelton. He was in high spirits, everything was going well; his canvass was prospering, and now Lady Lorrimer's conversation at parting, as reported by mamma, lighted up the uncertain future with a

steady glory, and set his sanguine spirit in a blaze. Attorneys, foreclosures, bills of exchange hovering threateningly in the air, and biding their brief time to pounce upon him, all lost their horrors, for a little, in the exhilarating news.

Mamma had been expecting a letter from Lady Lorrimer; one, at length, arrived this evening. Papa had walked round by the mill-road to visit old Captain Etheridge. Mamma and I were in the drawing-room as she read it. It was a long one. She looked gloomy, and said, when she had come to the end:

"I was right; it was not worth trying. I'm afraid this will vex your papa. You may read it. You heard Aunt Lorrimer talk about it. Yes; I was right. She was a great deal too sanguine."

I read as follows:

MY DEAREST MABEL,—I have a disagreeable letter to write. You desired me to relate with rigour every savage thing he said—I mean Harry Rokestone, of course—and I must keep my promise, although I think you will hate me for it. I had almost given him up, and thinking that for some reason he was resolved to forget his usual visit to me, and I being equally determined to make him see me, was this morning thinking of writing him a little cousinly note to say that I was going to see him in his melancholy castle. But to-day, at about one, there came on one of those fine thunderstorms among the fells that you used to admire so much. It grew awfully dark. Portentous omen! And some enormous drops of rain, as big as bullets, came smacking down upon the window-stone. Perhaps these drove him in; for in he came, announced by the waiter, exactly as a very much nearer clap of thunder startled all the echoes of Golden Friars into a hundred reverberations; a finer heralding, and much more characteristic of the scene and man than that flourish of trumpets to which kings always enter in Shakespeare. In he came, my dear Mabel, looking so king-like, and as tall as the Catstean on Dardale Moss, and gloomy as the sky. He is as like Allan Macaulay, in the Legend of Montrose, as ever. A huge dog, one of that grand sort you remember long ago at Dorracleugh, came striding in beside him. He used to smile long ago. But it is many years, you know, since fortune killed that smile; and he took my poor thin fingers in his colossal hand, with what Clarendon calls a "glooming" countenance. We talked for some time as well as the thunder

and the clatter of the rain, mixed with hail, would let us.

By the time its violence was a little abated, I, being, as you know, not a bad diplomatist, managed, without startling him, to bring him face to face with the subject on which I wished to move him. I may as well tell you at once, my dear Mabel, I might just as well (to return to my old simile) have tried to move the Catstean.

When I described the danger in which the proceedings would involve you, as well as your husband, he suddenly smiled; it was his first smile, so far as I remember, for many a day. It was not pleasant sunlight, I can tell you; it was more like the glare of the lightning.

"We have not very far to travel in life's journey," I said, "you and I. We have had our enemies and our quarrels, and fought our battles stoutly enough. It is time we should forget and forgive."

"I have forgotten a great deal," he answered. "I'll forgive nothing."

"You can't mean you have forgotten pretty Mabel?" I exclaimed.

"Let me bury my dead out of my sight," was all he said. He did not say it kindly. It was spoken sulkily and peremptorily.

"Well, Harry," I said, returning upon his former speech, "I can't suppose you really intend to forgive nothing."

"It is a hypocritical world," he answered.

"If it were anything else every one would confess what every one knows, that no one ever forgave any one anything since man was created."

"Am I, then, to assume that you will prosecute this matter, to their ruin, through revenge?" I asked, rather harshly.

"Certainly not," said he. "That feud is dead and rotten. It is twenty years and more since I saw them. I'm tired of their names. The man I sometimes remember—I'd like to see him flung over the crags of Darness Heugh—but the girl I never think of; she's clean forgot. To me they are total strangers. I'm a trustee in this matter; why should I swerve from my duty, and incur, perhaps, a danger, for those whom I know not?"

"You are not obliged to do this; you know you are not," I urged. "You have the power, that's all, and you choose to exercise it."

"Amen, so be it; and now we've said enough," he replied.

"No," I answered, warmly, for it was impossible to be diplomatic with a man like this. "I must say a word more. I ask you only to treat them as you describe

them, that is, as strangers. You would not put yourself out of your way to crush a stranger. There was a time when you were kind."

"And foolish," said he.

"Kind," I repeated; "you were a kind man."

"The volume of life is full of knowledge," he answered, "and I have turned over some pages since then."

"A higher knowledge leads us to charity," I pleaded.

"The highest to justice," he said, with a scoff. "I'm no theologian, but I know that fellow deserves the very worst. He refused to meet me, when a crack or two of the pistol might have blown away our feud, since so you call it—feud with such a maffin!" Every now and then, when he is excited, out pops one of these strange words. They came very often in this conversation, but I don't remember them. "The maffin! the coward!"

I give you his words; his truculent looks I can't give you. It is plain he has not forgiven him, and never will.

Your husband, we all know, did perfectly right in declining that wild challenge. All his friends so advised him. I was very near saying a foolish thing about you, but I saw it in time, and turned my sentence differently; and when I had done he said:

"I am going now; the shower is over." He took my hand, and said, "Good-bye." But he held it still, and looking me in the face with his gloomy eyes, he added: "See, I like you well; but if you will talk of those people, or so much as mention their names again, we meet as friends no more."

"Think better of it, do, Harry," I called after him, but he was already clanking over the lobby in his cyclopean shoes. Whether he heard me or not, he walked down the stairs, with his big brute at his heels, without once looking over his shoulder.

And now, dear Mabel, I have told you everything. You are, of course, to take for granted those Northumbrian words and idioms which drop from him, as I reminded you, as he grows warm in discussion. This is a "report" rather than a letter, and I have sat up very late to finish it, and I send it to the post-office before I go to bed. Good-night, and Heaven bless you, and I hope this gloomy letter may not vex you as much as its purport does me; disappoint you, judging from what you said to me when we talked the matter over, I scarcely think it can.

There is a Latin proverb, almost the only

four words of Latin I possess, which says *Omne ignotum pro magnifico*, for which, and for its translation, I am obliged to Mr. Carmel: "The unknown is taken for the sublime." I did not at the time at all understand the nature of the danger that threatened, and its vagueness magnified it.

Papa came in.

He read the letter, and the deeper he got in it the paler his face grew, and the more it darkened. He drew a great breath as he laid it down.

"Well, it's not worse than you expected?" said mamma, at last. "I hope not. I've had so much to weary, and worry, and break me down; you have no idea what the journey to Golden Friars was to me. I have not been at all myself. I've been trying to do too much. Ethel there will tell you all I said to my aunt; and really things go so wrong and so unluckily, no matter what one does, that I almost think I'll go to my bed and cry."

"Yes, dear," said papa, thinking, a little bewildered. "It's—it's—it is—it's very perverse. The old scoundrel! I suppose this is something else." He took up a letter that had followed him by the same post, and nervously broke the seal. I was watching his face intently as he read. It brightened.

"Here—here's a bit of good luck at last. Where's Mabel? Oh, yes! it's from Cloudealy. There are some leases just expired at Ellenston, and we shall get at least two thousand pounds, he thinks, for renewing. That makes it all right for the present. I wish it had been fifteen hundred more; but it's a great deal better than nothing. We'll tide it over, you'll find." And papa kissed her with effusion.

"And you can give three hundred pounds to Le Panier and Tarlton; they have been sending so often lately," said mamma, recovering from her despondency.

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY IN THE OLDEN TIME.

THERE is no truth in the tradition of the early Anglican church, that a Roman temple of Apollo ever stood on the site of the present abbey. The Thorney Island monks, there is no doubt, merely invented the story, to match the equally doubtful legend of a temple of Diana having been the predecessor of Saint Paul's. It is also uncertain whether King Sebert really founded the first abbey in the marshy peninsula,

though the place of his grave is still shown in the choir.

In Edward the Confessor, however, we behold the real founder of Westminster Abbey. When in exile in Normandy, out of reach of the pagan Danes, the pious king had vowed, if he ever returned safe to old England, to make a pilgrimage to the grave of his patron saint, Saint Peter, at Rome. Prevented from facing the dangers of such a pilgrimage by his faithful Commons, the king, who spent his life at mass or at the chase, resolved to found a monastery to his favourite saint. To gratify the royal devotee, the zealous monks of Thorney Island revived a beautiful old legend of the first building of the monastery in the time of Mellitus, first Bishop of London. The story ran thus: On a Sunday night, the eve of the consecration, a poor Saxon fisherman, named Edric, was casting his salmon-net in the Thames near Thorney Island. On a sudden he saw a bright light across the water on the Lambeth shore. Pulling over to the place he found a venerable man in foreign robes, who asked him to ferry him over the stream. Edric consented, and rowed the stranger over to the new church on Thorney Island. At once a celestial glory filled the sky. The building stood out without shadow like a gate of the New Jerusalem, while round it appeared a host of angels ascending and descending with odorous thuribles and lustrous candles. The stranger was Saint Peter, and he had come to bless Sebert's monastery. Presently the august stranger returned to the poor Saxon cowering in his boat, and asked for food, but no salmon had that holy night blessed his net. Then the saint rose and revealed himself as the keeper of the keys of heaven, and bade Edric tell Bishop Mellitus on the morrow that Saint Peter himself had consecrated the church. Finally the saint, mindful of his old craft, bade Edric go out again and throw his net, and he would catch a plentiful supply of fish, "whereof (for the saint was very precise) the greater part shall be salmon;" and that good luck he granted on two conditions; first, that Edric was never again to fish on Sunday; secondly, that he was to pay a tithe of the first catch to the new abbey at Westminster. All happened as the saint promised. The next day Edric, with a fat salmon in his hand, met the bishop at the monastery door, and told him his tale. Upon this the Thorney Island monks sought to escape the jurisdiction of the London bishop. They pointed to

the infallible proofs—the crosses marked on the church—the walls still wet with holy water—the Greek alphabet twice written on the sands of the island, the smears of holy oil, and the droppings of the angels' wax tapers. The bishop was too great a courtier not to at once waive his right. Henceforward, the abbey clergy took good care to take due tithe of the Thames fishermen from Gravesend to Staines. Saint Peter's words, to say the least, had been freely interpreted. Once every year a rude Thames fisherman might sit beside the Westminster prior at the state table of the refectory, and receive ale and bread from the monks' cellarer in return for his plump fish. Convenient miracles soon occurred to honour the new abbey. The old king carried an Irish cripple from the palace to the altar, when he instantly walked away whole. The king, also, while at high mass with Tennyson's Earl of Coventry, and the beautiful Godiva, saw a child "pure and bright like a spirit" appear in the sacramental wafer. Edward the Confessor eventually rebuilt the old palace close by the abbey, and there spent the best part of fifteen years in watching the new structure. He also rebuilt a shrine to Saint Margaret, on the site of an old chapel to the north of the abbey.

The new abbey was well supplied with relics by the pious king, including a girdle dropped by the Virgin to convince Saint Thomas of her Assumption, and a cross which had floated over after the king from Normandy. King Edward died a few days after the consecration. His body, robed and crowned, was laid before the high altar. Three times at least, says Dean Stanley, the living chronicler of the abbey, it has been seen. In the reign of Henry the First, Bishop Gundulf plucked a hair from the long white beard; in the reign of Henry the Second the pilgrim's ring, sent to the king by Saint John, was drawn from the shrivelled finger, and the cloth of gold vestments of the corpse cut into copes; again, in the reign of Henry the Third, the king made the shrine of the Confessor the centre of the abbey, raising it on a mound in front of the Lady Chapel, which he added. The grave was also disturbed by Henry the Eighth; it was replaced by Mary; and at the ill-omened coronation of James the Second, a rafter broke in upon the Confessor's coffin, and a gold chain and crucifix were, it is said, taken from among the hallowed bones.

In 1066 the Confessor died, and even now the abbey contains many records of his supposed sanctity and miracles. On the abbey screen of the time of Henry the Sixth are represented two legends of the Confessor. In the one Edward is warning a thief who is stealing from the royal chest to be off before his chamberlain, Hugotin, returns, as he would not leave him (the thief) a half-penny. Another represents the king seeing a black demon dancing triumphantly on the casks of gold collected to pay tribute to the Danes, a tax Edward afterwards abolished.

In the Bayeux tapestry the abbey is twice represented, in one instance with a warning comet above it. One later anecdote of the Confessor's tomb is worthy of mention. At the Conquest, Wulfstan, of Worcester, the only Saxon prelate undisplaced, was declared unfit for his see. The old man at once walked into the abbey, and struck his pastoral staff on the Confessor's tomb. "Edward," he said, "thou gavest me this staff, to thee I return it." The crosier instantly grew into the solid stone, and William, accepting the miracle, confirmed Wulfstan in the see. A few relics of the Confessor's building are still supposed to exist. Sir Gilbert Scott, R.A., is of opinion that one of these is the vast dark arch in the southern transept of the substructure of the dormitory, with its huge regal pillars. A massive low-browed passage leading from the Great Cloisters to Little Dean's Yard, and some portions of the refectory and infirmary chapel, are also of Edward's time, or soon after.

The Saxon kings were usually crowned at Kingston or Winchester, but the coronation of the Conqueror at the abbey initiated the abbey of the Confessor as the future crowning-place of our English kings. The crown, sceptre with the dove, gloves, and ring, were all Saxon, and the coronation oath was taken on a book of the gospels said to have been King Athelstane's, all of which, till the time of that royal robber, Henry the Eighth, were kept in the treasury of Westminster.

The coronation of Richard the First, the warrior king, was marked by great cruelties towards the ill-fated Jews. A royal proclamation had forbidden the presence of Jews or witches at the coronation banquet. Unfortunately some rich Jews, impelled by curiosity, pushed forward among the crowd; but, detected by the proud Norman nobles, were seized, stripped, and almost beaten to

death. A massacre and a plunder of the Jewish houses in London then took place, and spread through the provincial cities.

Richard's brother, the usurper John, at his coronation, to reward the Cinque Ports for their aid in his Norman campaigns, ordered their five barons to henceforward carry the canopy over the king on his way from the palace to the abbey, and during the process of the sacred unction. They had long before acquired a place at the right hand of the monarch during the coronation banquet for their vigilant watch over the Channel.

The coronation of Edward the First was followed by a singular exhibition of barbaric generosity. The day after, when Alexander of Scotland did homage to the warlike king, five hundred chargers were let loose among the crowd to be captured and kept by whoever chose—a rough gift. It was this same "malleus Scotorum" who first brought the sacred coronation stone of Scotland to the abbey, and caused it to be embedded in the coronation chair of England. . This stone, said to have been Jacob's pillow at Bethel during his wondrous vision of the angel's ladder, had, according to Scotch legends, visited Egypt, Spain, and Ireland. From Dunstaffnage Castle it was carried to Scone, where the Picts were finally defeated. Upon it the kings of Scotland were crowned according to an old and almost universal Gothic and Celtic custom. The stone is Scotch sandstone. An eminent Scotch antiquary has gone near to prove that "the stone of Fate" was really the pillow on which St. Columb rested his dying head at Iona, and that it was removed to Scone about 850 by Kenneth M'Alpin, the first real monarch of united Scotland. With all its drawbacks that rude block of sandstone is the most interesting relic in Great Britain. Edward, in the last year of his fierce reign, paid one hundred shillings for the present oak chair that encases the palladium of the Scotch. The chair at first was to have been copper, but the king changed his mind. It is probable that the panels were once filled with mosaic of different coloured glass, and the sides draped with knights, monsters, foliage, and birds, &c.; at the back was a king seated, his feet resting on a lion. The strenuous Scotch seem to have made many efforts to recover their lost palladium. It was even ordered in Edward's time to be surrendered to the Scotch, but the people of London, says an old chronicler, "would by no means allow it to depart from themselves." This

wonderful old piece of furniture, so dingy now, yet so consecrated by tradition, was used by the priest when celebrating mass at the altar of Saint Edward. Every English king has sat in that chair, and even Cromwell was installed in it as Lord Protector.

But leaving the abbey coronations for awhile, let us turn back to the reign of Henry the Third, who rebuilt the church. This poor, but prodigal king, spent nearly half a million on his religious plaything. "He probably," says Sir Gilbert Scott, "sent English architects to study at Amiens, Beauvais, and Rheims." Abbot Ware brought him an Italian workman, and mosaics from Rome, to construct the pavement before the shrine of Edward. Some of the architectural arrangements were purely French, and the choir was Spanish. The Confessor's central tower, choir, transept, and cloisters, were all pulled down. The great shrine contained niches round it to receive the pilgrims who came to touch the holy corpse as a cure for the king's evil. Henry's brother and two sons themselves removed the Confessor's coffin. Behind the shrine were placed precious relics brought from Palestine by the Templars, and given to the superstitious monarch—a tooth of Saint Athanasius, a stone bearing the footprint of our Saviour, and a phial of priceless value containing some drops of the blood shed on Calvary.

To the abbey of Henry the Third, Sir Gilbert Scott awards the highest praise. It is, he says, a work of the highest and noblest order—early English of the culminating period, the high-water mark of English architectural art, not pre-eminent in mere height or in richness of sculpture, but exquisite in proportion, and teeming with artistic beauty. This munificent king built part of the cloisters, the chapter-house, and the lower story of the western aisle of the transept. The chapter-house itself is an incomparable gem, and was the model of that at Salisbury, so carefully restored, with its round of quaint scripture histories, by Mr. Burges. It is now, alas! a mere wreck, for Edward the Third turned it over to the House of Commons, and in or after the reign of Edward the Sixth it became a public record lumber-room, and in 1740 the vaulting grew dangerous and was taken down. It is octagonal, and supported by one richly carved slender shaft (thirty-five feet high) of Purbeck marble. A curious external chamber, erroneously called the chapel of Saint Blaix, is now proved to have been the old revestiary, and

was where the priests' copes and vestments were hung. It was formerly crossed by a bridge which led the monks from their dormitory to the church. The room had formerly three doors, the central one lined with human skins—probably, modern antiquarians think, the skins of sacrilegious persons who perished for their crime. According to Sir Gilbert Scott, this was once the pyx chamber; a second room, a Saxon vault, was long used as a wine-cellar. In one of these rooms, under where the stairs of the dormitory ran, Sir Gilbert found the floor covered with dusty parchment bundles of old writs, the dates from Edward the Third to Henry the Seventh, upon which the Westminster boys soon after made a too successful foray; there were also a number of small wooden boxes containing sealed deeds (from Henry the Third to Edward the Third).

The tomb of Henry the Third in the Confessor's chapel has been most carefully described by Mr. Burges. For this tomb Edward the First, with filial piety, brought jasper from the Holy Land. Master William Torel (a London goldsmith) executed the idealised bronze figure (formerly gilt) of the king for the tomb, which is a double one. Both tombs are mosaic, of Italian work. The three recesses in the first tomb probably, says Mr. Burges, once held rich reliquaries protected by a metal grille. The sceptre in each hand, the canopy at the head, and the lions at the feet, have all disappeared. In the south ambulatory lies King Henry's little dumb daughter Catherine. The tomb was once brilliant with precious marbles and mosaics, which have been picked out by thieves. Over it stood a silver statue of Saint Catherine; near her husband rests Henry's beloved Queen Eleanor. The beautiful ideal effigy of the queen is also by Torel, and was formerly painted. In one hand the queen holds a sceptre, in the other the string of her crucifix. The family of Henry the Third, indeed, musters strong in the venerable abbey. Near the little dumb girl at the entrance of Saint Edmund's chapel, two other of Henry's young children, Richard and John, sleep, and, in a gold cup by the Confessor's shrine, once stood the heart of his nephew Henry, who was assassinated in the cathedral of Viterbo (as Dante mentions) by the revengeful sons of Simon de Montford. Henry's half-brother, William de Valence, lies in Saint Edmund's chapel. The favouritism shown to this Poitevin knight was one of the earliest causes

of the weak yet cunning king's quarrel with the turbulent barons. The effigy is of oak, covered with Limoges enamel. The lower tomb is of stone, and at the top of it stands a wooden chest, once covered with gilt and enamelled copper. The armorial bearings of Henry's contemporaries were once affixed to the wall of the choir, and along the nave hung the shields of Henry's nobles. In the choir is the tomb also of Edmund Crouchback, second son of Henry and the first Earl of Lancaster; he accompanied Edward and his brother to the Crusades. He it was who introduced the Provence rose into the Lancastrian arms. Aveline, his wife, lies beside him. There is also Henry's nephew, Aymer de Valence, who fought at Bannockburn, and who sat on the trial of the insolent favourite Gaveston, who had nicknamed him "Joseph the Jew," because he was gaunt, tall, and swarthy. Aymer was eventually assassinated in France. At the tomb of Queen Eleanor, on the anniversary of her death, one hundred wax-lights were annually burned, and each new abbot of Westminster was bound on oath to keep up this ceremony.

By-and-bye, Edward carried more dead to the old abbey; first of all his little son Alfonso, to whom he gave the golden crown of the last Welsh king to hang before the Confessor's shrine. Last of all came the conqueror of Scotland and Wales himself. The tomb was simple, as a soldier's should be—massive Purbeck marble, gilt, but with no mosaics, carving, or effigy. The king had desired that his flesh should be boiled, and his bones left to be carried at the head of the first English army that invaded Scotland, while two thousand pounds of silver were stored up, and one hundred and forty knights chosen, to bear his heart to the Holy Land as soon as Scotland should be subjugated. Once every two years the tomb was opened and the wax of the king's cerecloth renewed. But the conquest of Scotland never came, and the big heart never visited Palestine a second time. When the house of Lancaster seized the sceptre, Edward the Second and his dying wish were soon forgotten. The body remained unseen till Horace Walpole's flippant time, when the prying Society of Antiquaries looked in and saw the corpse of the old terror of Scotland, six feet two inches long, wrapped in waxed cloth and cloth of gold. The men with wigs poured in pitch upon the corpse, and so prevented the desecrated body from being again desecrated. The inscription on the tomb,

"Edward the First, the hammerer of the Scotch; keep your promise," seems to be at least as old as Henry the Fifth. Invisible now for ever rests the great Plantagenet, who enlarged the abbey westward into the nave.

Poor murdered Edward the Second was buried at Gloucester, near where he was tortured to death, but Edward the Third came duly to the great family burying-place, for there he had promised his beloved Queen Philippa to rest by her side. The face of the brave and noble queen's effigy is, says Mr. Burges, the earliest attempt at realistic portraiture in the abbey. Thirty figures of her Hainault kinsmen once surrounded her tomb, as round the king, her husband's, were graven his Tudor children, including the Black Prince. The sword and shield, that had seen such rough service in France, continued till Sir Roger de Coverley's time, and later, as part of the wonders exhibited by the abbey showmen.

That reckless prodigal, Richard the Second, who had rebuilt the greater northern entrance to the abbey, long known as Solomon's Porch, whose favourite badge, the white hart, still exists on a partition between the muniment room and the southern triforium of the nave, and whose effeminate portrait (one of our earliest royal portraits) is still to be seen in the Jerusalem Chamber, was interred, or supposed to be interred, in the abbey, where his queen had been buried. His tomb, erected by Henry the Fifth, and decorated with motley heraldic emblems, peascods, ostrich feathers, eagles, and leopards, still shows traces of gilding through centuries of dust.

Henry the Fifth, free from the guilt that perhaps made his subtle father unwilling to lie among the Plantagenets, whom he had displaced, expressed in his will his wish to be buried in the abbey he had enlarged, the nave being prolonged by that idol of our nursery days, Richard Whittington, thrice Lord Mayor of London, the greatest English architect of his age. At the funeral of the conqueror of Agincourt his three chargers were led up to the altar, and an effigy of the king was displayed upon a triumphal car. The body of Henry the Fifth was buried at the end of the Confessor's chapel. According to his will, a chantry chapel was raised high upon his tomb, with an altar in honour of the Annunciation. The chapel was built in the shape of the letter H, to eternally mark the pious and warlike founder. Around

the mortuary chapel were sculptured his French victories. Amongst the pomp and pride of heraldry appear the De Bohun's swans and antelopes, and Henry's peculiar emblematical badge, the flaming cresset, the shining light springing from the dead coals of his ill-spent youth. Above were hung his helmet, the emblazoned shield, that had shone like a leading star at Agincourt, and the saddle the royal horseman had bestrode. The shield is gone, but the saddle and helmet remain. The helmet still retains the dints it received from Alençon's sword, and is the same which the Alexander of England refused, in his Christian humility, to have borne before him in vain-glorious state when he returned in triumph to London. The effigy of oak was once plated with silver, and had a silver head, but the silver was stolen by burglars during the Dissolution. "Some Whig, I warrant you," said Sir Roger de Coverley; "you ought to look up your kings better." Henry's French queen, Catherine, so playfully sketched by Shakespeare, afterwards married Owen Tudor, a Welsh gentleman, and was eventually buried in an ill-made coffin in the Lady Chapel of the abbey. Henry the Seventh, when he destroyed Henry the Third's Lady Chapel, placed Catherine's coffin beside her husband. The tradition is that she herself wished to be buried apart from Henry as a punishment for having once disobeyed him. Happy husband to be only once disobeyed; paragon of a wife to be so penitent for only one offence!

Her unhappy son, Henry the Sixth, is supposed to have erected the screen which now divides Edward's shrine from the high altar. Certain it is that the king, ten or twelve years before his suspicious death, went to the abbey in the evening by torch-light with his confessor to choose his grave, but he could not decide, being unwilling to move the tomb of Queen Eleanor. Another time he came, made his prayers at his father's grave, then went up into the chantry, and in silence for an hour surveyed the whole chapel. The servile priests wished to make room for him by pushing on one side his father's tomb. But, kingly at least for once, "the sore saint for the crown" replied: "Nay; let him alone; he lieth like a noble prince. I would not trouble him." He then proposed to move the great reliquary from beside the Confessor's shrine, and thus gain seven feet of holy earth. "Lend me your staff," he said suddenly to the Lord Cromwell. "Is it

not fitting I should have a place here, where my father and ancestors lie, near Saint Edward?" Then he took a white staff, and pointing said: "Here, methinketh, is a convenient place, forsooth; forsooth, here will we lie. Here is a good place for us."

Then the master masons traced the oblong of the grave with an iron tool, and three days afterwards the tomb, never to be erected, was begun by statuary and copper-smith. But the battle of Wakefield was soon after fought, and when the feeble king died, the new dynasty took care to suppress the too frequent Lancastrian miracles by burying the corpse of "this uncle of blissful memory" in the chapel at Windsor.

To Henry the Seventh we are indebted for the beautiful chapel which Leland calls in rapture "the miracle of the world." The king wished, no doubt, to petrify the power of the new dynasty in this great monumental casket, and to leave an eternal proof at once of his piety, taste, and magnificence. To the Virgin Mary, his special patron, whom, "in all his necessities in exile he had made his continual refuge," he dedicated this great offering. He spent fifty thousand pounds in purchasing lands for his chapel, and he began the clearance for it by pulling down the Lady Chapel, an ancient tavern called the White Rose, once Chaucer's garden, and a small chapel of Saint Erasmus, built by Edward the Fourth's queen. Before the king's decease, the building was all but completed, and only nine days before his death, the king handed over five thousand pounds to Abbot Islip, to give the finishing stroke to the work. The chapel is allowed by such authorities as Mr. Parker to be the richest specimen known of English Tudor, and of the fan tracery, unknown in France.

The work was probably executed by a band of freemasons in the royal pay. The stone, which proved so bad, came from the Huddlestone quarries in Yorkshire. From the careful will of Henry the Seventh, we learn all his wishes. The tomb was to be of touchstone, with copper-gilt effigies. The sides were to be fitted with nineteen copper-gilt statuettes of Henry's patron saints, and the whole was to be enclosed with a metal-work enclosure of gilt copper. At the east end of the tomb there was to be a wooden altar covered with plates of gold. The king had planned three altars, with side spaces left for six more. One of

these was to be that of "his blessed uncle Henry," but the cost of canonisation of the said blessed uncle was more than the nephew perhaps dared to face, so it remained a mere good intention. In this gorgeous chapel death and pride are wedded for ever. The pride of race and conquest were cautiously blended for the people's eye. To succour and defend the king from the "evil and damnable spirits," the royal saints of Britain, Saint Edward, Saint Edmund, Saint Oswald, and Saint Margaret of Scotland, stood sentinels in many a niche, while Saint Barbara and Saint George stood in ceaseless vigil round his tomb. The pride of heraldry glowed on every wall—the pomegranate of Granada, the red dragon of Wales—even the badges of Henry the Sixth—the red rose of Lancaster, and the greyhound and portcullis of Beaufort. In the stained glass of the window, one sees the crown of the dead Crookback hanging on the Bosworth thorn-bush where it was found. Henry the Seventh died at Richmond, and his body was brought to this stately chapel in magnificent procession. The tomb was executed for his son, Henry the Eighth, by that pugnacious Florentine, Torrigiano, who also, with coarser art, designed the altar. The monument, says Mr. Burges, is pure Italian Renaissance, very delicate and beautiful, and must have been executed after that visit to Italy, when the sculptor in vain tried to induce Benvenuto Cellini to come over to England and work beside him. The Renaissance was fast coming, and with the revival of pagan literature through printing, the Reformation itself.

The gorgeous gates of Henry the Seventh's chapel are wood covered with brass plates, which have been, says Mr. Burges, richly gilt. One single lock-plate alone has escaped the hands of antiquaries and thieves. The badges in the perforated panels are crowns and portcullises, falcons and fetter-locks, fleur-de-lis, lions, and the crown in the rose-bush. In the splendid gilt brass grille of the tomb only six saints out of thirty-two remain in their niches.

Mr. Burges mentions a curious fact not to be forgotten about this royal chapel. Some years ago, when the aisle vaults were cleaned out, there was found among the rubbish of Henry the Seventh's time, a dirty, crumpled leaf of one of our earliest printer's books. It is possible, thinks this eminent antiquary, that Caxton set up his press in

the very spacious triforium, it being a quiet, undisturbed place for the laborious and enthusiastic old printer.

UNENDING.

I ~~see~~ that all these things come to an end,
The things we glory in, the things we fear;
Annihilation's shadow still doth lend
Its gloom to every pleasant thing and dear.
Each heavy burden under which we bend
Will some day from our wearied shoulders move;
One thing alone there is which hath no end—
There is no end to Love.

There is an end to kisses and to sighs,
There is an end to laughter and to tears;
An end to fair things that delight our eyes,
An end to pleasant sounds that charm our ears;
An end to enmity's foul libelling,
And to the gracious praise of tender friend;
There is an end to all but one sweet thing—
To Love there is no end.

That warrior carved an empire with his sword,
The empire now is but like him—a name;
That statesman spoke, and by a burning word
Kindled a nation's heart into a flame;
Now nought is left but ashes, and we bring
Our homage to new men, to them we bend;
There is an end to all but one sweet thing—
To Love there is no end.

All beauty fades away, or else, alas!
Men's eyes grow dim, and they no beauty see;
The glorious shows of Nature pass and pass,
Quickly they come, as quickly do they flee;
And he who hears the voice of welcoming
Hears next the slow, sad farewell of his friend;
There is an end to all but one sweet thing—
To Love there is no end.

And for ourselves—our father, where is he?
Gone, and a memory alone remains;
There is no refuge on a mother's knee
For us, grown old and sad with cares and pains;
Brotherless, sisterless, our way we wend
To Death's dark house from which we shall not rove;
And so we cease: yet one thing hath no end—
There is no end to Love.

THE SERGEANT'S GHOST STORY.

EVERYBODY, or nearly everybody, young or old, loves a ghost story. It is not necessary to believe in its truth to derive enjoyment from it. The more inexplicable it appears to our ordinary reason, the greater the charm that it exercises. Incredulity itself is pleased by a flight into the regions of the wonderful and the supernatural, as is evident from the satisfaction derived by people of all ages and nations from fairy tales, which nobody accepts for truth. But the fairy tale only appeals to the imagination. The ghost story goes deeper into the mysterious fountains of human nature, and touches on the confines of the great undiscovered land of spirits, whose secrets are not to be divulged on this side of the grave. Hence its charm and fascination, and hence

everybody who reads or hears a ghost story, experiences a satisfaction, either in believing in it implicitly, or in explaining it away by natural causes.

A few years ago I travelled in a British colony in America. The governor was absent in England on his holiday visit, and the duties of his office were temporarily performed by the chief justice, aided by the prime minister, or secretary of state. I was a frequent guest at Government House, and there became acquainted with an old soldier, one Sergeant Monaghan, who performed the part of orderly or messenger, and sometimes waited at table when the governor had company. The manners of a colony are free and easy, and learning that the old soldier was a thorough believer in ghosts, and had one ghost story which he was fond of telling, I invited him to my room, treated him to a cigar and a glass of grog, gave him a seat by the blazing wood fire, and prevailed upon him to evolve the story once again out of the coils of his memory. I repeat it, as nearly as I can, in his own words.

"You see," said Sergeant Monaghan, "Tim O'Loughlin was a delicate and wake sort of a boy. He had had a love affair in Ireland that weighed on his mind. He was a kind of cousin of mine, and served in my regiment as a private. Perhaps he would have risen to be a sergeant if he had lived, but, as I said, he was not strong. You may have noticed that from the gate of Government House, where the sentry-box stands, you can see into the burial-ground on the opposite side of the road. Not a cheerful situation for Government House. But, however, all the best rooms look into the garden at the back, and the governor need not see much of the burial-ground, except when he goes in and out. One foggy night, Tim O'Loughlin was stationed as sentry at Government House. It was full moon at the time, and the light upon the white warm mist that lay like an immense blanket over the earth, shone weak and watery-like. It was not a very thick fog, and did not hide objects at the distance of a hundred yards, but only revealed them to make them look larger than they really were. I was in the guard-room smoking my pipe, comfortably as I am now (either a pipe or a cigar, it's all the same to Sergeant Monaghan, if the baccy's good), when who should walk in but Tim O'Loughlin, with a face of such wild, blank, dismal terror, as I never saw before or since on a human being. It was fully an hour before his time to be

relieved of duty, and in leaving his post he had committed a very serious offence. I ordered him back to his post, but he sat down by the fire, and doggedly refused to stir.

"What's the matter with you, Tim?" said I. "Are you unwell? And why did you come off duty? And it's I myself that'll have to report you."

"You may report—you must report; but I will not go back again, though I be shot for it. I have seen him."

"Him?—and who is him?"

"Him! Why Captain Percival. He came close up to me, and pointed to a man in the burial-ground digging a grave next to his own."

"The captain had died about a month previously, and Tim, who was very much attached to him—and indeed everybody in the regiment was—had grieved very much about his death. He had acted as the captain's servant, and had received many favours at his hand, and poor Tim was a grateful crater."

"It's all nonsense, Tim," said I. "Go back to your post, and in reporting you, I'll make the best case out that I can for you."

"Never!" said Tim, "if I be shot for it."

"As chance and luck would have it, the doctor happened to drop in at this moment, and learning the circumstances that had induced Tim to leave his post, questioned him fully on the subject. But he felt Tim's pulse first, and there came over his face an expression that I noticed, but that Tim did not, which said very plainly to me that he did not like the beat of it. Tim was confident that he had seen Captain Percival, and that the captain pointed out the grave which a man was digging alongside of his own, and had distinctly told him that he was to be buried there as soon as the grave was quite ready."

"And you saw the man digging the grave?" asked the doctor.

"Distinctly," replied Tim; "and you can see him too, if you go immediately."

"Do you go, sergeant," said the doctor to me, "and I'll sit with O'Loughlin till you return. I think you had better detail another sentry in his place. Is there any brandy to be got? But stay; it does not matter. I have a flask. And O'Loughlin, my man, you must take a pull at it; it is medicine, you know, and I order it."

"Tim was taking a pull at the flask as I went out. I thought it possible enough that the grave-digger might be at work,

but I did not know what to say about the captain, except to think, perhaps, that Tim had been dreaming, and fancied he saw things that had no existence. I got into the burial-ground without difficulty—the gate was not fastened—and went straight to the grave of Captain Percival. There stood the gravestone, sure enough, with the captain's name, age, and date of death upon it, and a short story besides, setting forth what a good and brave fellow he was, which was all as true as gospel. But there was no grave-digger there, nor no open grave, as Tim had fancied. I went back, and found Tim and the doctor together, Tim not looking quite so wild and white as before, but bad and ill, all the same.

"Well?" inquired the doctor.

"Well!" I replied. "There's nothing to be seen. It's just as I thought. Poor Tim's fancy has cheated him, and it's my opinion the poor boy is not well at all. An' what am I to do about reporting him?"

"You must report him, of course," said the doctor; "but I don't think much harm will come to him out of that. O'Loughlin, you must go into hospital for a day or two, and I will give you some stuff that will bring you out again right as a trivet, and you will see no more ghosts."

"Tim shook his head, and was taken quietly to the hospital, and put to bed. The brandy had done him good; whether it was all brandy, or whether there wasn't a drop of sleeping stuff in it, I can't say, but it's very likely there was, for the doctor told me the longer he slept in reason the better it would be for him. And Tim had a long sleep, but not a very quiet one, for all that same, and tossed about for the matter of a dozen hours or so. But he never got out of bed again. When I saw him at noon the next day he was wide awake, and very feverish and excitable."

"How are you, Tim, my poor fellow?" said I, taking his hand, which was very hot and moist.

"I've seen him again," he replied. "I see him now. He is sitting at the foot of the bed, and pointing to the graveyard. I know what he means."

"Tim, it's crazy that ye are," said I.

"He shook his head mournfully. 'Mona-ghan,' he sighed, rather than said, 'ye've been a kind friend to me. Give that to the little girl in Ireland—you know.' And he drew a photographic portrait of himself from under his pillow, tied round with a blue ribbon, from which depended a

crooked sixpence with a hole in it. 'In a few days ye'll be laying me in the ground alongside of the captain. Do ye see him now? he is leaving the room, smiling upon me, and still pointing to the graveyard. I am no longer afraid of him. He means me no harm, and it is no blame to him if he is sent to tell me to get ready.'

" 'Tim, you are cheating yourself. What you're telling me is all a waking drame. I can see no ghost.'

" 'Of course you can't,' said Tim, 'the spirits never appears to two persons at once. But Patrick Monaghan,' he added, 'let us talk no more on the subject, but send Father Riley to me, that I may unburden me sowl, and die in peace.'

"It would have been cruel in me to have argued the matter with the poor afflicted creature, and him such a friend of my own too, so I left him to go in search of the doctor first, and of Father Riley afterwards. They both came. What passed between Tim and the holy father, of course I never knew; but the doctor told me distinctly that Tim was in a very bad way. The stomach was wrong, the nerves were wrong, the brain was wrong; in fact, he was wrong altogether, and had a fever which the doctor called by a very grand and high-sounding name, which I did not hear very plainly, and which if I did I am unable to remember. Tim survived three days after this, sleeping and dozing, and talking in his sleep, and every now and then saying, amid words which I could not well put together into any meaning, 'I am coming, I am coming.' Just before he died, he grew more collected, and made me promise that he should be buried in the grave that had been dug for him by the side of the captain. I knew that no such grave had been dug as he said, and that it was all a delusion; but what was the use of arguing with a dying man? So I promised of course, by my honour and by my sowl, to do all I could to have his last wish gratified. The doctor promised also, and so did Father Riley, and I think poor Tim died happy. His last words were something about the ribbon and the crooked sixpence, and the captain, the very last syllable being 'I come.'

"We buried the poor lad in the place assigned by himself, and I was so affected altogether by the sadness of the thing, that I could have persuaded myself, in fact I did persuade myself, that I saw Captain Percival in undress, or fatigue uniform, just as he had appeared to poor Tim walking past

the sentry-box before the door of Government House, and stopping every now and then to point at the grave; and the more I closed my eyes to avoid seeing him, the more permanently and clearly he stood before me."

"And are you in any doubt on the subject now?" I inquired.

"And indeed I am," replied the sergeant, shaking the ashes from his cigar with the tip of his little finger. "Tim must have seen the ghost, and must have believed in him, and if I only saw it after Tim's death, it is but another proof of what almost everybody knows, that two people never saw the same ghost at the same time. And ghost or no ghost, it is quite clear that Tim died of him, and might have been alive at this moment but for the ghost's extraordinary behaviour. But it's one of the questions that all the talk in the world can't settle."

"Do you think Tim would have seen the ghost of Captain Percival, or anybody else, if he had been sound in wind and limb, if he had been a strong hearty man with a good appetite, and an undisordered stomach?"

"Can't say," replied the sergeant, taking a sip of his liquor. "The doctor thought not; but doctors don't know everything; and if there were no ghosts, why, I should like to ask, should the spirit of Samuel appear to Saul, and answer his questions?"

"Well, sergeant," said I, "if you are going to the Bible for arguments, I shall shut up. Finish your glass, my man, and let us say good-night."

He finished his glass, he said good-night, and walked away with the air of a man who thought he had had the best of the argument.

WHISTLERS AND WHISTLING.

WHISTLERS are not generally regarded with favour in polite society, nor admired for the sweet music they produce. When a man is about to show himself saucy, he whistles with a peculiar intonation; and when he wishes to hide something wrong, he whistles to show the unconcernedness of innocent simplicity—just as a woman (according to the testimony of one of her sex) hums a tune with similar intent. The dictionary meanings of the word whistle offer wide facilities for attaching queer notions to it. For instance, a whistle is a small, tubular instrument, to be blown in a certain way; the whistle, in the lingo of

many a beer-drinker, is the mouth; a whistle is a particular tone or sound; to whistle is to produce that sound; a whistle or whistling is a blowing of wind amongst trees and through crevices; and amid these various meanings, it would be hard if we could not hit upon some or other to fit all sorts of likes and dislikes, proverbs and old sayings, omens and superstitions, habits and customs—guarded, however, with this important exception, that women seldom whistle.

Let it not be supposed that whistling is absolutely without a scientific basis. Nevertheless, certain it is that we do not usually think much about science when we whistle. The man who, according to Dryden,

Trudg'd along, unknowing what he sought,
And whistl'd as he went for want of thought,

implied by that form of expression that he was not thinking about much, and least of all about recondite philosophical exposition. The

Flaxen-headed cow-boy
Who whistled o'er the lee,

whistled because he liked it, and that's enough. And so did Milton's husbandman,

The ploughman near at hand,
Whistled o'er the furrowed land.

Ploughmen, indeed, are favourite whistlers with the poets. There is Gay's:

The ploughman leaves the task of day,
And trudging homeward, whistles on the way.

The aid of whistling in passing away weary time is made use of in King Lear:

I've watch'd and travel'd hard;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.

In *As You Like It* we have the whistling tone of a wheezy man:

His big manly voice,
Changing again towards childish treble,
Pipes and whistles in its sound.

Cowper makes another class of man whistle; but it is rather unkind to call him a wretch, seeing that he is the postman:

He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful; messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some;
To him indifferent whether grief or joy.

In another line Cowper describes his hero as

Whistling as if unconcern'd and gay.

Nor must we forget the lover who, in obedience to a hint from his mistress, attended to the injunction:

Whistle, and I'll come to thee, my lad.

The readers of the *Spectator* will not forget the manner in which Addison as-

sociates whistling with fun and frolic. It is the story of three countrymen who competed for a prize in a whistling match; a guinea for him who could whistle clearest, and go through his tune without laughing. It was one of the conditions that a merry-andrew was to stand before them, and try to provoke their risible faculties by ludicrous contortions and grimaces. Two of the three broke down under this ordeal; the third remained a stoic, and bore off the prize.

But, as we have implied, all this whistling has science to rest upon. The whistlers, without knowing it, are performing acoustical experiments. When air (so says science) is impelled forcibly through a small orifice, it gives rise to vibrations appreciable to the ear; and the more rapid the vibrations, the more acute the note. The mechanism concerned in producing audible sound, belonging to the throat, tongue, palate, and lips, is something marvellous in its beauty, especially what are called the vocal chords or cords in the throat, which vibrate in a wonderful way during singing and whistling. Anatomists have shown the structure of these parts; microscopists have detected and measured the minute details of many of the component tissues, tubes, and fibres; while physiologists have gone far in tracing the exquisite connexions between one function or operation and the rest. Professor Willis, of Cambridge, once made a series of tubes which enabled him to imitate, in a humble way, all the regular vowel sounds, as well as the nasal vowels or consonants. Other men have spent half their lives in devising what they called talking machines—very poor talkers at best, but illustrative of the complex way in which the size and shape of cavities modify the pitch and other characteristics of audible sounds. Helmholtz, the great German investigator, has pursued this matter further than anybody else, and has paved the way to much probable future knowledge of the physiology of singing.

Do we talk of the physiology of whistling? Not quite. We only mean that when science has revealed to us something more than we at present know about the physiology of singing, whistling will, at the same time, be added, as (what boys would call) "a little one in"—nearly closed lips instead of generally open lips, and the tongue all but quiescent. Herr von Joel, in all probability, knew nothing of these matters, so far as science was concerned.

He was a good whistler, and knew it; and having reason to believe that he could whistle a little money into his pocket, he tried the experiment, and succeeded; until at length the muscles of his mouth refused any longer to adapt themselves to the purpose. There are many odd ways of producing musical sounds, or what are intended to pass as such, by some process midway between those of singing and whistling. Boys sometimes produce a kind of music through the small teeth of a comb covered with tissue paper, by breathing through the two layers. Herr Eulenstein, an accomplished performer on the jew's-harp,* who destroyed all his teeth by too long a continuance in this practice, illustrated in a skilful manner the effect produced on a simple vibrating spring by varying the internal capacity and shape of the mouth. Many persons can produce music from a common clay tobacco-pipe, by placing one end between the teeth, varying the shape of the cavity of the mouth, and maintaining a series of slight percussions on the stem. Some thirty years ago four Germans came over to England, and gave performances as the Bohemian Brothers, or Bohemian Minstrels. Their music was of a peculiar character. Three of them sang in the ordinary way; the fourth, without articulating any words, brought forth sounds of vast depth and power by a peculiar action of the muscles of the mouth; to these sounds was given a quality like those of the strings of a double bass, by the movements of the tongue. About the same time, or somewhat more recently, a party of Tyrolese came over, who, by skilful modifications of the shape of the mouth cavity, strange contortions of the lips and exterior of the mouth, and still more strange breathings through the nostrils, managed to imitate (in a rude sort of way) many of the instruments in an orchestra. A Sardinian blind man, said to have been a shepherd, when in London a few years ago, played complete overtures and orchestral pieces on a little whistle only two or three inches long; this peculiar achievement was due partly to numerous changes in the degree of force with which he blew into the whistle, but still more to the movements of lips, tongue, and palate

in modifying the size and shape of the mouth cavity.

But to return to our whistlers. We have a vivid, though not very delighted, recollection of a whistler in the streets of London, who, in wet weather and dry, in summer and winter, in forenoon and afternoon, from Monday morning till Saturday night, whistled the same ever-repeated never-changing tune. Poor fellow! his appetite for bread-and-cheese probably survived his power of earning those luxuries by such mouth-aching means.

Every schoolboy is a whistler in a way that involves a bit of acoustic philosophy; or, if not, a few trials ought to make him competent to produce fist music or fist whistling. Bring the thumbs of the two hands together, side by side, arranging the hands and the closed fingers to form a hollow cavity; blow into a narrow aperture left between the two thumbs, and you may, by a little dexterity, produce a loud sound, shrill or deep according to the force of the blast. As to another kind of sound, produced by blowing hard when two fingers are between the closed lips, we had better say nothing about it; it is naughty—the thieves' whistle. There is more connexion between these kinds of finger-whistling, and the small toy-whistles of children, and the dog-whistles known to sportsmen, than might at first appear; a narrow orifice is the main thing concerned, whether the sides of the orifice be of bone and flesh, or of metal and wood.

There is an old superstition, which it is not easy to get to the bottom of, concerning a certain cry or sound heard in the night, supposed to be produced by the Seven Whistlers. What or who these whistlers are is an unsolved problem. In some rural districts they are popularly believed to be witches, in others ghosts, in others devils, while in the Midland Counties they are supposed to be birds, either plovers or martins—some say swifts. In Leicestershire it is deemed a bad omen to hear the Seven Whistlers, and our old writers supply many passages illustrative of the popular credulity. Spenser, in his *Faerie Queene*, speaks of

The whistlers shrill,
That who hears doth die.

Scott, in the *Lady of the Lake*, names the bird with which his character associated the cry:

And in the plover's shrilly strain
The signal whistlers heard again.

When the colliers of Leicestershire are

* Etymologists have lately been invited to consider whether this name may not originally have been jaw's-harp or jaw-harp, more likely than the French *jeu*, and still more likely than *Jew*. When we know that Marazion, in Cornwall, has been transformed into Market Jew, we need not be surprised at the other change.

flush of money, we are told, and indulge in a drinking bout, they sometimes hear the warning voice of the Seven Whistlers; they get sobered and frightened, and will not descend the pit again till next day. Wordsworth speaks of a countryman who

*The seven birds hath seen that never part,
Seen the Seven Whistlers in their nightly rounds,
And counted them.*

A year or two ago, during a thunder-storm which passed over Leicestershire, and while vivid lightning was darting through the sky, immense flocks of birds were seen flying about, uttering doleful affrighted cries as they passed, and keeping up for a long time a continual whistling like that made by some kinds of sea-bird. The number must have been immense, for the local newspapers mentioned the same phenomenon in different parts of the neighbouring counties of Northampton, Leicester, and Lincoln. A gentleman, conversing with a countryman on the following day, asked him what kind of birds he supposed them to have been. The man answered, "They are what we call the Seven Whistlers;" and added that whenever they are heard it is considered a sign of some great calamity, and that the last time he had heard them was on the night before the deplorable explosion of fire-damp at the Hartley Colliery. Soldiers, too, in time of fierce war, are said to be not quite free from a superstitious belief that such cries in the air denote an approaching battle with great slaughter. A stranger notion than any of these associates the Seven Whistlers, or the shrill birds of some indefinite number, with a very old myth of past days. One evening, some years ago, a gentleman was crossing a wide-spreading moor in Lancashire, in company with an elderly man belonging to the district. As they were passing along they were startled by the whistling overhead of a flight of plovers. The old man said that in the days of his youth the Lancashire hill-folk considered such an occurrence a bad omen, foretelling ill-luck to the person who hears the whistling. Further questions brought out the fact that these birds are called the Wandering Jews—the bodies of the birds contain the souls of the Jews who assisted at the Crucifixion, and who are doomed to float in the air for ever. The gentleman was again reminded by his companion of the omen, when, on coming to a cross-road, he found that a particular stage-coach for which he had been on the look out had just passed; whereby he had to

finish the journey on foot—the Wandering Jews had robbed him of his ride. There must be something very old and widely-spread in this kind of legend, for the caique-men, or boatmen on the Bosphorus, when they see flights of birds continually passing up and down the channel, believe them to be the souls of the damned, doomed never to have rest in this world, and never to see another, always moving about, but having no purpose in their coming and going.

Whistling, or rather blowing through a whistle, has sometimes been adopted as a test, whereby to determine whether a toper still retains soberness enough to blow a good blast. A drinking-cup, fashioned by a silversmith at Nuremburg in the sixteenth century, was so shaped that it could not be set down on a table till quite emptied, nor filled unless held in the hand. When the mouth of the cup was downwards, the bottom appeared surmounted by a windmill. The drinker having emptied the cup or goblet, blew into a little pipe at the side, gave a shrill whistle, and at the same time set in motion the vanes of the windmill; the number of times that the mill turned round was indicated on a small dial; and thus the drinker could show visible testimony that he was still vigorous enough to blow lustily. But there is something far more stirring than this in Burns. One of his ballads, full of life and "go," begins:

*I sing of a whistle, a whistle of worth,
I sing of a whistle, the pride of the North,
Was brought to the court of our good Scottish king,
And long with the whistle all Scotland shall ring.*

The story goes that, in the train of Anne of Denmark, when she came to Scotland with James the Sixth (afterwards James the First of Great Britain), there came also a Danish gentleman of gigantic stature and great prowess, and not less great as a worshipper of Bacchus. He had in his possession a little ebony whistle. When a banquet and drinking bout commenced, he laid this whistle on the table; and whichever guest was last able to blow it, all the others being disabled by the potency of the wine, was to carry off the whistle as a trophy of victory. The Dane produced credentials of his victories, without a single defeat, at Copenhagen, Stockholm, Moscow, Warsaw, and several of the smaller courts of Germany. He challenged the Scots to try the issue with him. Nothing loth, they encountered him; but he saw them one after another under the table, powerless to blow a whistle of any kind. At length came

forward Sir Robert Lawrie, of Maxwelltown, who, after a hard contest of three days and three nights' duration, saw the Dane prostrated, blew a shrill whistle, and carried off the prize—with as much liquor as his inner man could possibly contain. Sir Robert's son afterwards lost the whistle to Walter Riddel, of Glenriddel. On the 16th of October, 1790, the whistle was, after all these years, contested for by Sir Robert Lawrie (a lineal descendant of the former owner), Riddel of Glenriddel, and Ferguson of Craigdarroch. This was the encounter celebrated in Burns's ballad, one stanza of which tells us that

Six bottles apiece had well wore out the night,
When gallant Sir Robert, to finish the fight,
Turn'd o'er in one bumper a bottle of red,
And swore 'twas the way that their ancestors did!

The orgies need not invite us into detail; suffice it to say that the Lawrie and the Riddel succumbed to the Ferguson, who triumphantly carried off the whistle.

Whistling and drinking are connected by other ties, not quite so dissipated and inebriating as those associated with the Danish and Scottish achievements. There are whistling tankards and whistling cups, which seem to have been intended by their original makers and users to supply a mechanical substitute for the call of "Waiter!" at a tavern. An old lady, widow of a canon residentiary of York, recently presented to the corporation of Hull two ancient silver tankards, one of them called a whistling tankard. It had belonged to Anthony Landeal, mayor of Hull in 1669. A whistle was attached to one side in such a way that it could not be sounded until quite empty; a toper knew that when he could make the whistle speak, there was not wherewithal in the tankard to supply his wants; whereupon he blew a shrill blast to summon the taverner, waiter, or servitor. Among other such tankards known to be still in existence, one is made of earthenware, about eight inches high; it is narrow, quaintly ribbed or embossed on the outside, and provided with a whistle in the feet or stand. There are large earthenware whistling cups or bowls preserved by some of the old Devonshire families, for toast and ale and jolly junketings. One of them has a capacity for six pints of good liquor, and has a rude but hospitable motto around the brim, inviting the guests to share the contents of the bowl; there are four substantial handles, and a whistle on one side. These whistling tankards and bowls have sug-

gested an explanation—not quite so far-fetched as some etymological speculations—concerning the origin of certain phrases or sayings which are not easily understood else, such as "whistling for it," "whistling for his drink," and "wetting his whistle."

Whistling occupies, or occupied—sailors must themselves say whether the superstition has been driven away by screw steamers and ironclads—a peculiar place among the omens believed in by sailors. Whistling used to be considered by old salts as a sort of irreverent defiance of Providence, or rather as tending to provoke the Evil One to show his power in stirring up tempestuous gales. When a storm is raging, don't whistle; when there is a dead calm, whistle a little to encourage a gentle breeze—this seems to be the formula. Miners and pitmen are strongly smitten with a superstition bearing some analogy to this; they do not whistle in the mines, and express uneasiness when a visitor unconsciously does so. Invisible beings are much more earnestly believed in down in these dark places than up amid the broad light of day; and those beings seem to consider whistling rather discourteous to themselves. As to the Alpine guides dissuading mountain climbers from whistling in dangerous places, there is a cogent reason for this; in certain states of the snow, whistling would produce a vibration in the air likely to dislodge and bring down an avalanche.

MY LADY'S RING.

"DREAMS is more than dreams, mem," said Charles, the footman, in a deep, significant tone.

Charles was admitted to the room of which Mrs. Scarlet was the presiding goddess, on account of his "hexcellent heduca-tion." He had been known to have attended several scientific meetings, and "Charles says" decided many vexed questions on historical and scientific subjects in the servants' hall.

"And, talking of dreams," continued Charles, "I wish somebody would dream where to find missis's ring."

The house in Grosvenor-street, where the party of servants were having supper, was owned by a pretty old lady, rich and unmarried, courtly, of old-fashioned ways, who called her housekeeper "Skialet," and her chariot a "charyot."

The usually quiet and regular household

had been sadly "upset," as they remarked, by the loss, within the last few days, of a diamond ring of great value, left by the old lady, as she perfectly remembered, on her dressing-table one Friday night.

There was excitement and distress amongst the Grosvenor-street household. The cook had been seen weighing several carrots, the supposed weight of the lost jewel. She was hesitating as to the precise number of "several"—four appearing too many, and three scarcely up to the mark, when Charles approaching her with an ironical smile, informed her that, "Although the word was the same in hevery respect, still the jewellers' carrots do not belong in hany way to the kingdom of vegetables. Heverything being divided into kingdoms—diamonds too."

Charles was in livery, and did not therefore enlarge upon the subject as he might under other circumstances. The cook flung her bunch of carrots into a corner, and prepared to devote herself to other branches of the "kingdom of vegetables."

I was then waiting-maid of the dear old lady, whom I truly loved. I was a lonely creature, too, in those dreary days; but the comforts of the housekeeper's room were luxuries to one who, like myself, had passed her youth in a vain endeavour to aid her parents to work their weary way to independence in the bush. I was in Grosvenor-street for a purpose, and sat amongst the servants silent and sad. To chronicle the orations of Charles was my great and only amusement. Why I endured those three most weary years I cannot even now explain. I could not have remained a day, had it not been for the love I bore my mistress.

We were a small but "select" party of four in the housekeeper's room, Scarlet, the housekeeper, Scarlet the butler (husband and wife), Charles, and myself. Scarlet, the butler, was enormously fat. I think I never saw so large a head and neck. He looked quite imposing behind my lady's chair at dinner, but when he threw open wide the drawing-room doors to announce a visitor whom he thought it worth his while to introduce himself, then he was sublime. He was entirely honest. The pride and pleasure of his life was to protect the wealth of gold and silver plate intrusted to his care. He polished it, respected it, and loved it. It was delightful to see him lifting a valuable soup tureen with parental tenderness from its bed of pink cotton. Nature had denied him children, so he adopted my lady's dish-covers.

He rarely spoke; but the day in question, over his cake and wine, he became animated; he, too, was under the influence of the painful state of things, and letting his enormous hand fall heavily upon the table, and turning his honest face towards us, said, "If I had stolen my lady's ring, I would go hang myself!"

"You would save the hangman a great deal of trouble," sharply answered his helpmate, indicating with her finger his enormous throat.

The poor man was startled and astonished; in all the years of their married life his wife had never thus addressed him. She was not loving, but she was never cross, and they had sailed silently but peacefully many years together, on a most untroubled sea. At last he withdrew his eyes from her, and spoke no more. Charles, who had sought in vain an answering look from me, continued the conversation.

"'Aving our boxes searched is what hevery one would wish; but it's the most onsatisfactory thing a policeman does. What's to prevent my taking the ring out of my box, and hanging it in a bag up the kitchen chimney? Look at Mrs. Scarlet. Hold up, mim, hold up," said Charles, vainly trying to prevent her slipping down stiff and straight upon the floor. White as death: not dead though, for she shook like a leaf. We carried her to bed, and after some time left her recovering and sleepy, Scarlet, her husband, forgetting the recent insult, purring around her, as it were, and soothing her to rest. Poor old soul! The loss of the diamond ring and the consequent upset had been, we said, too much for her.

The season was over, my lady closed her house in Grosvenor-street, and started for her place in Cornwall, taking Scarlet, as usual, in the carriage with her.

The weather was intensely hot, and my lady travelled at night, taking pillows and comforts, intending to sleep and be happy. Scarlet resolutely refused to tuck herself up, preferring to sit bolt upright to keep herself awake, a vain endeavour. She sank gradually but surely into a remote corner, uncomfortably doubled up, but fast asleep. My lady was awake, watching Mrs. Skiarlet with much amusement, when suddenly a look of horror crept over the sleeper's placid face. She screamed aloud, "The purse, the old leather purse! I took it out of the chimney. Oh, my Lord! my Lord! save a poor old woman! The devils are after me again." Scarlet sat upright,

her eyes open, staring wildly, but fixed in sleep; she seized my lady's arm, and shook it. "Here, here, in the old leather purse—the diamond ring—take it, and go!"

My lady was brave as a lion. She knew the old leather purse that Scarlet had carried about her for years. In an instant she understood the situation, and with her bright little eyes glittering like steel, she stood over the sleeping woman, hissing out, in an agitated whisper, "You old serpent, give me the purse."

Slowly the sleeping woman drew it out, and, with the same horror-stricken eyes, gave it to my lady, who calmly took the missing ring from its depths and placed it once more upon her finger.

My lady let the woman sleep till the train was drawing up at Blank, then she woke her, waving her hand with the recovered treasure before the face of the miserable woman, who fell in a fit upon the floor.

My lady was gone when Scarlet recovered consciousness, and they never met again. My lady left her to her misery and her despair, but took no further steps to punish. Another housekeeper reigns in her stead. My lady refused to receive the resignation of her faithful butler, who brought it, with tears of shame, and with a list of the plate. After a severe illness he returned to his old mistress, and I have heard that the dishonest Scarlet derives the bread she eats from the mistress she had robbed.

Charles is fixed in his original opinion that "dreams is more than dreams, mem." He is now hall-porter at the Blank Museum, a post after his own heart. He may frequently be seen, and heard, escorting through the various apartments, little groups of his old friends, and explaining to them particularly the "kingdom of vegetables."

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER VIII. A GRAND SCHEME.

A GREAT scheme was on foot. Braham Nagle's CONCERT was in every one's mouth!

Every one had joined in the natural speculation as to the merits of the Nagles. The natural answer was, "Give 'em an opportunity of hearing you!" It was Billy Gardiner that was most "hot" upon this idea.

"It is all very well," he said; "but people must see and hear you in the flesh."

We shall have you on the platform, and Miss Corry, too. Why, her splendid voice would fill Westminster Abbey! There's the new Brickford Hall, all ready and finished, and it would be a fine opportunity to open it with a concert."

Braham Nagle greatly inclined to the idea. This was, indeed, seizing the Brickford populace en gros, in wholesale style, instead of laboriously nibbling at them one by one. It was a superb idea, and should be carried out magnificently. He at once proceeded to organise it.

Indeed, everything was favourable to the designs of the family. Among the Brickfordians was the usual number of young fellows who, after singing Let me Kiss Him for his Mother, or for some other person, at a supper-table, discovered they had voices, and were eager to display them on more auspicious platforms. There was a larger band, with rasping voices, that loved chorusing the Messiah and such classical works, and who delighted in toiling through the heavy loam of oratorios; honest hodmen, who were content to stand in great herds, and rasp out "The glo-ho-ho, ho, ho, ho — ry-hi-hi-hi-hy! the pow-how-how-her!" for hours together.

Here was material suited to Braham Nagle, taking them as being worth five shillings apiece, at the least, and all for what, as the professor would say, "for standing in rows and dividing the wave of a stick among them." Here were the makings of a Philharmonic, Harmonic, Anacreontic Society, or whatever you would be pleased to call it.

However, this was all in the future. Now, there was to be thought of the great enterprise of the concert which Mr. Nagle had taken in hand enthusiastically. No prime minister could appear to have more upon his mind. He was all day planning and rehearsing, with a special view to the occasion; he had, as it were, issued an Order in Council re-establishing the HARMONIC MATINÉES, which, however, did not proceed beyond that abstract constitution. The concert, it would seem, was given "in connexion with Mr. Nagle's Harmonic Matinées," as though that society had been the means of training up a vast number of executants, who would lend strength to the performance; but the truth was, that though the society was thus called into existence, it was innocent of members. Still it was a good word to conjure with. Musical education was in as raw a state at Brickford as its new red brick; and though there were plenty of voices ordered to be raised in the flesh,

mental article of furniture, still the mere "Shot drill," as Mr. Nagle called it, "of our old friend Doremifasol," would be but an unsatisfactory contribution to a musical entertainment. Mr. Nagle, therefore, felt that he must chiefly rely on his family resources, and on the assistance of a friend. After all, that made but little difference; for, as his ardent supporter and canvasser, Bill Gardiner, observed, the chief point was to dispose of the tickets beforehand, and secure the cash.

"All you want," he added, "is to get the people together." Once they were seated anything would do.

Allusion has been made to the assistance of "a friend." It will be guessed that this contribution included aid from Mr. Alfred Duke. The young man cried out in unfeigned surprise at the notion, when Mr. Nagle made his communication.

"I sing in public! Why they'd all laugh at me. Nonsense, my dear Mr. Nagle."

"Your aid will be invaluable," said the other, gravely. "Your voice may not be of the strong, roaring tamber, like the gigantic Simms! I won't go so far as that; but it is a nice gentlemanly organ, and my little part in its training, I must say, has done marvels. It would be an advantage to me, I confess, to exhibit such a clever pupil. But if you won't, you know——"

Corinna was listening, and joined her supplications. Mrs. Nagle, in a humbler fashion, murmured her entreaties.

"Corinna—my own child," added Mr. Nagle with emphasis, "will sing, but that is no matter."

The wistful eyes of the young lady, and a deep sigh, accomplished what Mr. Nagle's arguments would have failed to do. There was, also, a plentiful stock of male vanity to be appealed to, which, by perpetual praise and enthusiastic bursts of admiration, had been fanned into a greedy flame. Nor must it be supposed that these people were mere crafty schemers, deceiving this young fellow with their flatteries and feigned admiration. They were so pleased with his partiality for their family, that everything he did seemed admirable, or at least "nice," and even in the family "bosom," Mr. Nagle found himself enlarging on the nice gentlemanly way in which his friend "sang his little song." It was therefore carried unanimously that Mr. Alfred Duke was to be brought forward. Reports were duly sent abroad that Mr. Nagle had "a new bary-

tone" ready to come out. Mr. Gardiner was the most active in magnifying the importance of this project, and went about propagating the news, as if it were some piece of state policy.

"I can assure you," he would say, "this is going to be a tip-top affair. Nagle has discovered a mine of harmony in this young fellow's voice. The great Simms, he says, will be nothing to him. Gentlemen, you know, now take to this sort of thing, provided, of course, they have the material, and, I am told, draw their thousand a year at the Italian Opera—so Nagle tells me."

So, indeed, was Nagle fond of telling, with other romantic legends of the kind. Mr. Gardiner had even, after infinite difficulty, succeeded in persuading his relative, Old Doughty, to attend, and had got him to take two tickets. Meanwhile "the rehearsals" went forward at the Crescent; that is, Mr. Duke was to be found there practising, morning, noon, and night; that is, again sitting, or talking in the window with the enchanting Corinna, while Mr. Nagle sat at a sort of extemporised bureau, buried in papers and tickets, writing despatches, as it were, and, as he said, "worn to the very grave." Everything was going on magnificently, and a very fair amount of cash had been received. But the sanguine papa looked forward to the great night as the certain occasion of another far more important event, and fondly hoped that the amorous youth, dazzled by the brilliancy of his success, would bow down and lay his love and fortune at the feet of the enchanting Corinna; though, indeed, it must be stated that the young lady herself would have been fairly content that matters should go on as they were for an indefinite time, and found the whole a most enchanting dream.

It must be confessed, too, that in this view she was seconded by the views of the young gentleman himself, into whose head the idea of marrying a singing-master's daughter, never entered. There was no deliberate heartlessness in this notion of his; he really believed that this exhibition of his devotion and admiration for this handsome girl, coming from so well-born and noble a gentleman, was a sufficient compliment, and that his love would be all that the trusting girl would require. Had any one reasoned seriously with him on the subject, he would have put aside gravely the idea of marrying. "They are sensible people," he would say, "without the sheer folly you give them credit for. They like me; I like

them. It is a great pity there are so many busy people in the world who insist on forcing everything between hard and fast lines. One can have warm friendships, I suppose, without thinking of marriage." He felt very scornful in this view of his, and even took a pride in impressing it on the wondering public.

It was now come to a day or two preceding that momentous one of the concert. Mr. Nagle was seated in his drawing-room at the Crescent, engaged in the delightful task of revising the proofs of some large bills that had just come in. The family were all about him, while Mr. Alfred Duke, almost blushing, surveyed his own name in type for, perhaps, the first time. A copy of the document is supplied in this place :

BRICKFORD HALL, BRICKFORD.

MR. BRAHAM NAGLE,

Of the Metropolitan and Brighton Concerts, Director
of the Harmonic Matinées, Author of
The Dying Swan, &c. &c.,

Begs to announce his

FIRST GRAND CONCERT,

In which he will be assisted by the following Artists :

MRS. BRAHAM NAGLE

(Of the Metropolitan and Brighton Concerts),

MISS CORINNA NAGLE,

and

ALFRED DUKE, ESQUIRE,

Who has kindly consented for this occasion only, to
assist the *Bénéficiaire* with his gifted organ.

PART THE FIRST.

Prayer—*Mosè in Egitto*. **ROSSINI.**

Mr. Braham Nagle, Mrs. Braham Nagle, Miss
Corinna Nagle, and Mr. Alfred Duke.

Duetto Buffo—"Chio Sono." **SPELUCCI.**

Mr. and Mrs. Braham Nagle.

Solo—The Death of Nelson. **BRAHAM.**

Mr. BRAHAM NAGLE.

* * * The song will be given strictly, as sung by the
immortal Braham himself, and as taught by him to his
favourite pupil, Braham Nagle.

Solo—In this Old Chair. **BALFE.**

(By particular desire.)

MR. ALFRED DUKE.

"Oh, but I say," remonstrated the young man, "look at the size of the letters in which you have put my name! Why, the people will laugh at me."

"Not a bit too large, amigo," replied the reader, confidently, "the 'caps' are just right."

"If they fit I suppose I must wear them," said the young man, gaily; "but I know I shall make an ass of myself."

"Hush!" said Mr. Nagle; "let us proceed now to

PART THE SECOND.

Duet—Love me! **ROBINS.**

Miss Corinna Nagle and Mr. ALFRED DUKE.

A regular cooing duet; thirds all the way through up to the avenue, when we put the spurs on, and you canter up to the door in grand style. Oh, to have heard the way the imperishable B. and Kitty Stephens warbled and trilled that—it would have done you for breakfast and dinner for a week!"

It will be evident from the cast of the programme, that Mr. Nagle intended to make his daughter's admirer as conspicuous as possible, and the astute old cantor felt that the singing of an amatory duet in public was not a bad way of setting the public tongue going. He, Nagle, at the instrument, the young pair nervous and faltering, and Corinna fortifying her companion by encouraging whispers, coming to his rescue even, would awaken a softness, an emollient tenderness in the youth, which might lead to the happiest results!

But there were dangers in the way, "Breakers ahead," as Mr. Nagle called them. For who could suppose that at the very moment that the happy party were enjoying the feast of anticipatory glory, an interruption should have come of the most disagreeable sort.

CHAPTER IX. AN UNWELCOME intruder.

MR. NAGLE had the great poster open before him, with Mr. Alfred Duke's name in conspicuous "caps." Mr. Duke was before him in an attitude of docility, his arm on the back of Corinna's chair, an attitude grateful to the paternal eye.

At this crisis the door was opened, and a figure stood before them—Lady Duke!

The confusion may be conceived. Bandits surprised in the act of dividing their booty could not have been more disconcerted. This image may seem unsavoury, but had any one suggested it to Lady Duke, she would there and then have thought it happy to a degree.

"I actually saw these things," she said, contemptuously, pointing to the placard, "on the walls—on the common walls. It is disgraceful—and I cannot suffer it!"

"Madam!" began Mr. Nagle, a good deal confused, "it is merely a little music—we wished to bring forward Mr. Alfred——"

"Bring forward!" she repeated, with disgust that spoke volumes. "But I do not blame you—but you," she said, turning to her son. "I blush to think that you would allow our name to be hawked about, and stuck on the walls like some of the common strollers that go round the towns."

Mr. Nagle started and coloured furiously. The friend and pupil of the imperishable Braham to be classed as "a common stroller!" Yet he did not know what to say.

"It is all ridiculous—not to be thought of. The people here are talking of this intimacy, against which I set my face. It is right to let you know at once that nothing can come of it. If you are wise, you will let the thing alone. You are all very clever, no doubt, in your profession, but this sort of thing won't do. Neither I nor his father will tolerate it. And as for having a son of mine exhibited for money, such a thing is not to be endured a moment! The whole league is disgraceful."

The young man, colouring and indignant, interposed. "Now, mother, what is all this about? what can you be talking of? You shouldn't really—it ain't fair."

"No, it is not fair," said the lady, unconsciously amending the phrase of her son, "to have our name hawked about in this style. I never was so disgraced in my life. But it must be put a stop to. I will not permit it. I suppose you will not allow these people to prevent you showing respect to your mother's wishes? Perhaps you will come with me now?"

"Certainly, mother," said the young man, with deference. "But I can assure you, you are unjust to Mr. Braham Nagle and his family. They have had nothing to do with this, beyond being good enough to find that I would be of some assistance to them in their concert——"

"Exactly," said the lady, scornfully; "you could be persuaded into believing that you had a voice like Mario. Your weak and foolish vanity could swallow any flattery of that kind."

This was a weak and foolish speech on the part of so worldly-wise a lady. The young fellow was nettled and mortified.

"Mother, you never knew much about music——"

"I can assure you, my lady," interposed Mr. Nagle, with his most engaging and emollient manner, "that it is an organ of great capability, and with proper care——"

At last Corinna spoke; she had been writhing under the humiliation of this scene. To see her relatives treated after what Lady Duke—a coarse woman—would have styled "the dirt of her shoe," entered into her very soul like a hot iron.

"Papa! papa! I implore you, do not debase us before this lady! Let her go, and let her take her son, who esteems us so little that he can allow us to be treated in

this way. Tell her, papa—since he will not—that it was not we who sought him, but he us. She saw with her own eyes, at that party, how he distinguished me with his attentions. For shame! It is an unworthy and unbecoming attack to be made on us by this lady, who does not disdain to come to our humble lodgings——"

"I came for my son, madam," said the lady, trembling with rage; "but I do not choose to enter on any discussion of the matter with you. So you will excuse me, please. Now, sir, perhaps, you will give me your arm."

Young Mr. Duke cast an imploring and helpless look at Corinna. Then, without a word, he did as he was bid, gave his mother his arm, and left the room with her.

The unhappy family were left with the great staring poster spread out over the table: all, it was but too probable, that would be left of that young man's aid and intimacy.

"Such treatment!" said Mr. Nagle, after staring ruefully at the crimson letters of Mr. Alfred Duke's name. "Really quite uncalled for."

Corinna's eyes were still flashing.

"Uncalled for! Strike his name out! I am ashamed of myself to have put any trust in him. Oh, papa!" she added, covering her face, "what a mortification."

"And the expense and trouble," added Mr. Nagle; "and the bother one has had listening to him. It will ruin the whole affair. You don't know how to manage these things, child; you should not have spoken to his mamma the way you did. You mismanaged the whole business."

"I am glad of it," said Corinna, pacing up and down. "But to have been so deceived in one I thought so noble and chivalrous!"

"He is a mean cur," said Mr. Nagle, in a sudden fury. "I always thought so. But I should like to know who's to pay for these posters where his trumpery name figures?"

There was some sense in this question, for the printer would hardly look to Mr. Nagle's purse. It was a wretched state of things. The family were plunged in despair, Mr. Nagle's spirits sinking lower and lower, until he declared that music was the most infernal "stone-breaking" plague that had ever come upon the face of the earth; that he would sooner a million times "have been put to scraping ships' bottoms"—at the best an extraordinary trade to select, but it must be pardoned to him in his state of excitement.

Corinna paid no attention to these jeremiads, until the mother, the former soprano assoluta, and a lady who, in her husband's judgment, had no pretensions to sense, suggested that, after all, the young man did not mean to throw them over, and that it would be a pity to break off with him all at once.

"I'll never speak to him again," said the young lady, vehemently, "never!"

This view of his wife's seemed to strike Mr. Nagle, for he presently was saying that after all the boy might be "more led than said"—whatever that expression meant—when suddenly a knock came to the door, and the faithful maid of the lodgings came joyfully to report that Mr. Alfred had come back, and was below!

A radiant smile of triumph lit up Corinna's face. The rest of the family discreetly withdrew and left her to meet the visitor.

Mr. Duke entered with a downcast air.

"I know what you must think of me," he said, "and I appeared weak, and even mean; but you don't know—you can't understand how I am situated."

"I do understand," she answered with a quiet scorn. "I am bitterly disappointed. I, who thought you everything that was perfection."

"What is a man to do?" he said, impatiently. "You can't go against your family; and after all, though I would have liked to have sung and helped your concert" (it was only fair that after the family had laboured so hard to persuade him of the value of his organ, he should adopt their convictions and turn their compliment against them), "still it does not do, you know, as my mother says, to have one's name flourished about in these things"—and he pointed to the unlucky posters—"where money is taken at the doors."

"You are right," said Corinna, after a pause, "it does *not* do. It does not do that persons in your condition should come down to our level, and associate with a poor music-master and his daughter. At least, not for them. It was you, recollect, who came to us, who forced yourself on us, and it seems cruel to put this mortification upon us. To be spoken to—treated in this way—as if we were some——"

Here Corinna's eyes filled up with tears

of mortification and grief; her voice choked, and covering her face with her hands, she burst into a torrent of sobs.

Of course, Mr. Duke was beside her in a moment, soothing, and ardently protesting.

"I would do *anything* sooner than wound you, dear, dearest Corinna. But I can't do this. I dare not. At home they have everything in their power. I must not offend my mother. She has made this point. I should be ruined, if——"

Corinna had recovered herself. She was ashamed of her weakness.

"Quite proper. Now we understand each other. But you should not have behaved as you have done. You should have thought of the mortification, the humiliation you are bringing on us. All I beg and stipulate for is, that you will leave this place at once. Any more such experiments would be too costly and dangerous for us. You must honourably help us in trying to forget that we have ever known you. You must promise this. It is the only way you can make up for the injury you have done us."

The young man looked hurt and injured.

"Give you up altogether—not come and see you! You fancy these things can be done as easily as——"

"As easily as removing your name from that thing," she answered promptly. "Yes, it can be done. You shall see it. We have pride and self-respect, which shall not be trifled with any more. Good-bye! and go away as quickly as you can from this place."

She moved to the door where she stood for a moment. No dramatic heroine ever looked more brilliant or magnificent. The young man rushed to her.

"Oh, Corinna!" he said, "if you ask me, if you put it to *that*——"

"If!" she repeated, her flashing eyes making his droop. When he raised them again she was gone. He waited some moments, then went away, and hurried down the street, vehemently talking to himself.

Just published, the
**EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER FOR
 CHRISTMAS, 1872,**
 ENTITLED
DOOM'S DAY CAMP.

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THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 215. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BONE AND THE MEAT."

CHAPTER XXIV. LADY MARDYKES'S BALL.

THE autumn deepened, and leaves were brown, and summer's leafy honours spread drifting over the short grass and the forest roots; winter came, and snow was on the ground; and presently spring began to show its buds, and blades, and earliest flowers; and the London season was again upon us.

Lady Lorrimer had gone, soon after our visit to Golden Friars, to Naples for the winter; she was to pass the summer in Switzerland; and the autumn somewhere in the north of Italy; and again she was to winter in her old quarters at Naples. We had little chance, therefore, of seeing her again in England for more than a year. Her letters were written in varying spirits, sometimes cheery, sometimes de profundis. Sometimes she seemed to think that she was just going to break up and sink; and then her next letter would unfold plans looking far into perspective, and talking of her next visit to England. There was an uneasy and even violent fluctuation in these accounts which did not exactly suggest the idea of a merely fanciful invalid. She spoke at times, also, of intense and exhausting pain. And she mentioned that in Paris she had been in the surgeons' hands; and that there was still uncertainty as to what good they might have done her. This may have been at the root of her hysterical vacillations. But, in addition to this, there was something very odd in Lady Lorrimer's correspondence. She had told mamma to write to her once a fortnight, and promised to answer punctually; but nothing could be more irregular. At one time, so long an interval as

two whole months passed without bringing a line from her. Then, again, she would complain of mamma's want of punctuality. She seemed to have forgotten things that mamma had told her; and sometimes she alluded to things as if she had told them to mamma, which she had never mentioned before. Either the post-office was playing tricks with her letters, or poor Lady Lorrimer was losing her head.

I think, if we had been in a quiet place like Malory, we should have been more uneasy about Lady Lorrimer than, in the whirl of London, we had time to be. There was one odd passage in one of her letters; it was as follows: "Send your letters, not by the post, I move about so much; but, when you have an opportunity, send them by a friend. I wish I were happier. I don't do always as I like. If we were for a time together—but all I do is so uncertain!"

Papa heard more than her letters told of her state of health. A friend of his, who happened to be in Paris at the time, told papa that one of the medical celebrities, whom she had consulted there, had spoken to him in the most desponding terms of poor Lady Lorrimer's chances of recovery. I do not know whether it was referable to that account of her state of health, or simply to the approach of the time when he was to make his debut in the House; but the fact is that papa gave a great many dinner-parties this season; and mamma took her drives in a new carriage, with a new and very pretty pair of horses; and a great deal of new plate came home; and it was plain that he was making a fresh start in a style suited to his new position, which he assumed to be certain and near. He was playing rather deep upon this throw. It must be allowed, however, that nothing could look more promising.

Sir Luke Pyneweck, a young man, with an estate and an overpowering influence in the town of Shillingsworth, had sat for the last three years for that borough, not in the House, but in his carriage, or a Bath-chair, in various watering-places at home and abroad, being, in fact, a miserable invalid. This influential young politician had written a confidential letter, with only two or three slips in spelling and grammar, to his friend the Patronage Secretary, telling him to look out for a man to represent Shillingsworth till he had recovered his health, which was not returning quite so quickly as he expected, and promising his strenuous support to the nominee of the minister.

Papa's confidence, therefore, was very reasonably justified, and the matter was looked upon by those sages of the lobbies who count the shadowy noses of unborn Houses of Commons as settled.

It was known that the dissolution would take place early in the autumn.

Presently there came a letter to the "whip" from his friend Sir Luke Pyneweck, announcing that he was so much better that he had made up his mind to try once more before retiring.

This was a stunning blow to papa. Sir Luke could do without the government better than the government could do without him. And do or say what they might, no one could carry the borough against him. The Patronage Secretary really liked my father; and, I believe, would have wished him, for many reasons, in the House. But what was to be done? Sir Luke was neither to be managed nor bullied; he was cunning and obstinate. He did not want anything for himself, and did not want anything for any other person. With a patriot of that type who could do anything?

It was a pity the "whip" did not know this before every safe constituency was engaged. A pity papa did not know it before he put an organ into Shillingsworth church, and subscribed six hundred pounds towards the building of the meeting-house.

I never saw papa so cast down and excited as he was by this disappointment. Looking very ill, however, he contrived to rally his spirits when he was among his friends, and seemed resolved, one way or other, to conquer fortune.

Balls, dinners, concerts, garden-parties, nevertheless, devoured our time, and our drives, and shopping, and visits went on, as if nothing had happened, and nothing was impending.

Two notable engagements for the next week, because they were connected, in the event, with my strange story, I mention now. On Tuesday there was Lady Mardykes's ball, and on that day week papa had a political party to dinner, among whom were some very considerable names indeed.

Lady Mardykes's balls were always, as you know, among the most brilliant of the season.

While dancing one of those quadrilles that give us breathing time between the round dances, I saw a face that riveted my attention, and excited my curiosity. A slight old gentleman, in evening costume, with one of those obsolete under-waistcoats, which seemed to me such a pretty fashion (his was of blue satin), was the person I mean. A forbidding-looking man was this, with a thin face, as brown as a nut, hawk's eyes and beak, thin lips, and a certain character of dignified ill-temper and even insolence, which, however, did not prevent its being a very gentleman-like face.

I instantly recognised him as the old man, in the chocolate-coloured coat, who had talked so sharply, as it seemed to me, and poor Nelly, with Laura Grey, on the Mill-walk, in the shadow of the steep bank and the overhanging trees.

"Who is that old gentleman standing near the door at the end of the room, with that blue satin about his neck? Now he's speaking to Lady Westerbroke."

"Oh! that's Lord Wrayworth," answered my friend.

"He does not go to many places? I have seen him, I think, but once before," I said.

"No; I fancy he does not care about this kind of thing."

"Doesn't he speak very well? I think I've heard——"

"Yes, he speaks only in Indian debates. He's very well up on India; he was there, you know."

"Don't you think he looks very cross?" I said.

"They say he is very cross," said my informant, laughing; and here the dance was resumed, and I heard no more of him.

Old Lord Wrayworth had his eyes about him. He seemed, as much as possible, to avoid talking to people, and I thought was looking very busily for somebody. As I now and then saw this old man who, from time to time, changed his point of observation, my thoughts were busy with Laura Grey, and the pain of my uncertainty.

returned. Pain mingled with remorse. My enjoyment of this scene contrasted with her possible lot, upbraided me; and for a time I wished myself at home.

A little later I thought I saw a face that had not been seen in London for more than a year. I was not quite sure, but I thought I saw Monsieur Droqville. In rooms so crowded, one sometimes has so momentary a peep of a distant face, that recognition is uncertain.

Very soon I saw him again, and this time I had no doubt whatever.

He seemed as usual, chatty, and full of energy; but I soon saw, or at least fancied, that he did not choose to see mamma or me.

It is just possible I may have been doing him wrong; I did not see him, it is true, so much as once glance towards us; but Doctor or Monsieur Droqville was a man who saw everything, as Rebecca Torkill would say, with half an eye. Always noting everything that passed; full of curiosity, suspicion, and conclusion; and with an eye quick and piercing as a falcon's.

This man, I thought, had seen, and was avoiding us, without wishing to appear to do so. It so happened, however, that some time later, in the tea-room, mamma was placed beside him. I was near enough to hear. Mamma recognised him with a smile and a little bow. He replied with just surprise enough in his looks and tones to imply that he had not known, up to that moment, that she was there.

"You are surprised to see me here?" he said; "I can scarcely believe it myself. I've been away thirteen months—a wanderer all over Europe; and I shall be off again in a few days. By-the-bye, you hear from Lady Lorrimer sometimes; I saw her at Naples, in January. She was looking flourishing then, but complaining a good deal; she has not been so well since; but I'll look in upon you to-morrow or next day. I shall be sure to see her again, immediately. Your friends, the Wiclyffs, were at Baden this summer, so were the D'Acres. Lord Charles is to marry that French lady; it turns out she's rather an heiress; it is very nearly arranged; and they seem all very well pleased. Have you seen my friend Carmel lately?"

"About three weeks ago; he was going to North Wales," she said.

"He is another of those interesting people who are always dying, and never die," said Monsieur Droqville.

I felt a growing disgust for this unfeeling man.

He talked a little longer, and then turned to me, and said:

"There's one advantage, Miss Ware, in being an old fellow; one can tell a young lady in such charming and brilliant looks as yours to-night, what he thinks; just as he might give his opinion upon a picture; but I won't venture mine; I'll content myself with making a petition. I only ask that when you are a very great lady, you'll remember a threadbare doctor, who would be very glad of an humble post about the court; and who is tired of wandering over the world in search of happiness, and finding a fee only once in fifty miles."

I do not know what was in this man's mind at that moment. If he were a Jesuit, he certainly owed very little to those arts and graces of which rumour allows so large a share to the order. But brusque and almost offensive as I thought him, there was something about him that seemed to command acceptance, and carry him wherever he chose to go. He went away, and I saw him afterwards talking now to one great lady, now to another.

Lord Wrayworth, who looked like the envious witch whom Madame D'Aulnois introduces sometimes at the feasts of her happy kings and queens, throwing a malign gloom on all about them, had vanished.

That night, however, was to recal, as unexpectedly, another face, a more startling reminder of Malory and Laura Grey.

CHAPTER XXXVI. NEWS OF LADY LORRIMER.

OLD Lord Verney, of all persons in the world, took a fancy to take me down to the tea-room. I think he believed, as other wiser people did, that papa, who was certainly clever, and a very shrewd club-house politician, might come to be somebody in the House, in time.

As usual he was telling an interminable story without point or beginning or end, about himself, and all mixed up with the minister, and the opposition leader, and an amendment, and some dismal bill, that I instantly lost my way in.

As we entered the tea-room, a large room opening from the landing, he nodded without interrupting his story to a gentleman who was going down-stairs. My eye followed this recognition, and I saw a tall, rather good-looking young man. I saw him only for a moment.

I was so startled that I involuntarily almost stopped Lord Verney as we passed; but I recovered myself instantly. It was tantalising. He always talks as if he were

making a speech; one can't, without rudeness, edge in a word; he is so pompous, I dared not interrupt him. He did that office for himself, however, by taking an ice; and I seized the transitory silence, and instantly asked him the name of the gentleman to whom he had bowed; I thought he said, "Mr. Aulmney," and as a clever artist of that odd name had lately painted a portrait of Lord Verney, I was satisfied that I had heard him aright.

This was to be a night of odd recognitions. I was engaged to Lord John Roxford, who came up and saying, "I think this is our dance, Miss Ware?" took me away, to my great relief, from Lord Verney. Well, we danced and talked a little; and I learned nothing that I remember, except that he was to return to Paris the next day. Before he took me to mamma, however, he said:

"A very dear friend has asked me, as the greatest favour I can do him, to introduce him to you, Miss Ware; you will allow me?"

He repeated, I thought—for he was looking for him, and his face at that moment turned a little away, and the noise considerable—the very same name that Lord Verney had mentioned. As Rebecca Torkill used to say, "my heart jumped into my mouth," as I consented. A moment more, and I found myself actually acquainted with the very man. How strange it seemed! Was that smiling young man of fashion the same I had seen stretched on the rugged peat and roots at Plas Ylwd, with white face, and leaden lips, and shirt soaked in blood? He was, with his white gloved hand on the pier-table beside me, inquiring what dance I could give him. I was engaged for this; but I could not risk the chance of forfeiting my talk with my new acquaintance. I gave it to him, and having the next at my disposal, transferred it to the injured man whom I had ousted.

The squabble, the innocent surprise, the regrets, the other hypocrisies, and finally the compromise over, away we went to take our places in the quadrille. I was glad it was not a round dance. I wanted to hear him talk a little. How strange it seemed to me, standing beside him in this artificial atmosphere of wax-light and music. Each affecting the air of an acquaintance made then and there; each perfectly recognising the other, as we stood side by side talking of the new primo tenore, the play, the Aztecs, and I know not what besides!

This young man's manner was different from what I had been accustomed to in

ball-rooms. There was none of the trifling, and no sign of the admiration which the conversation and looks of others seemed to imply. His tone, perfectly gentleman-like, was merely friendly, and he seemed to take an interest in me, much as I fancied an unknown relation might. We talked of things of no particular interest, until he happened to ask me something of my occasional wanderings in the country. It was my opportunity, and I seized it like a general.

"I like the country," I said. "I enjoy it thoroughly; I've lived nearly all my life in the country, in a place I am so fond of, called Malory. I think all about there so beautiful! It is close to Cardyllion; have you ever seen Cardyllion?"

"Yes, I've been to Cardyllion once; only once, I think; I did not see a great deal of it; but you, now, see a great deal more of the country; you have been to the lakes?"

"Oh! yes; but I want to ask how you liked Cardyllion; how long is it since you were there?"

"About two years, or a little more, perhaps," he answered.

"Oh! That's just about the time the Conway Castle was wrecked; how awful that was! I had a companion then; my dearest friend; Laura Grey was her name: she left us so suddenly, when I was away from Malory, and I have never seen her since. I have been longing so to meet any one who could tell me anything about her: you don't happen to know any one, do you, who knows a young lady of that name? I make it a rule to ask every one I can; and I'm sure I shall make her out at last."

"Nothing like perseverance," said he. "I shall be most happy to be enlisted; and if I should light upon a lady of that name, I may tell her that Miss Ware is very well and happy?"

"No, not happy, at least not quite happy until she writes to tell me where she is, or comes to see me—and tell her I could not have believed she would have been so unkind."

Conversations are as suddenly cut short in ball-rooms as they are in a beleaguered city, where the head of one of the interlocutors is carried off by a round-shot. Our dialogue ended with the sudden arrival of the ill-used man whom I could no longer postpone, and who carried me off, very much vexed as you may suppose, and scarcely giving my companion time to make his bow.

Never was "fast dance" so slow as this.

At length it was over; and, wherever I went my eyes wandered hither and thither in search of the tall young man with whom I had danced.

The man who had figured in a scene which had so often returned to my imagination was now gone; I saw him neither in the dancing-rooms nor in any others.

By this time there was a constant double current to and from the supper-room, up and down the stairs. As I went down, immediately before me was Monsieur Droqville. He did not follow the stream, but passed into the hall.

Monsieur Droqville put on his loose black wrapper, and wound a shawl about his throat, and glanced, from habit, with his shrewd hard eyes at the servants as he passed through them in the hall. He jumped into a cab, told the driver where to stop, lighted a cigar, and smoked.

He got out at the corner of a fashionable but rather dingy street not very far away. Then he dismissed his vehicle, walked up the pavement smoking, passed into a still quieter street, also fashionable, that opens from it at an obtuse angle. Here he walked slowly, and, as it were, softly. The faint echo of his own steps was the only sound that met him as he entered it. He crossed, threw his head back, and shrewdly scanned the upper windows, blowing out a thin stream of tobacco-smoke as he looked.

"Not flown yet, animula, vagula, blandula? Still on the perch," he said, as he crossed the street again.

His cigar was just out, and he threw it away as he reached the steps. He did not need to knock or ring. He admitted himself with a latch-key.

A bedroom candlestick in the hall had a candle still burning in it. He took it and walked quietly up. The boards of the stairs and lobbies were bare, and a little dust lay on the wall and banister, indicating the neglected state of a house abandoned by its tenants for a journey or a very long stay in the country. He opened the back drawing-room door and put his head in.

A pair of candles lighted the room. A thin elderly lady, in an odd costume, was the only person there. She wore a white, quilted headcloth, a black robe, and her beads and cross were at her side. She was reading, with spectacles on, in a small book which she held open in both hands, as he peeped in. With a slight start she rose. There was a little crucifix on the table, and a coloured print of the Madonna hung

on the wall on the nail from which a Watteau had been temporarily removed.

"Has your patient been anointed yet?" said Monsieur Droqville, in his short nasal tones.

"Not yet, reverend father," she answered. They were both speaking French.

"Has she been since nearly in articulo?"

"At about eleven o'clock, reverend father, her soul seemed at her very lips."

"In this complaint so it will often be. Is Sister Cecilia up-stairs?"

"Yes, reverend father."

"Father Edwyn here?"

"Yes, reverend father."

He withdrew his head, closed the door and walked up-stairs. He tapped gently at the door of the front bedroom.

A French nun, in a habit precisely similar to that of the lady down-stairs, stood noiselessly at the door. She was comparatively young, wore no spectacles, and had a kind and rather sad countenance. He whispered a word to her, heard her answer softly, and then he entered the room with a soundless step—it was thickly carpeted, and furnished luxuriously—and stood at the side of a huge four-post bed, with stately curtains of silk, within which a miserable shrunken old woman, with a face brown as clay, sunk and flaccid, and staring feebly with wide glassy eyes, with her back coiled into a curve, and laden with shawls, was set up, among pillows, breathing or rather gasping with difficulty.

Here she was, bent, we may say, in the grip of two murderers, heart-complaint and cancer. The irresistible chemistry of death had set in; the return of "earth to earth" was going on. Who could have recognised in this breathing effigy of death, poor Lady Lorrimer? But disease now and then makes short work of such transformations.

The good nurse here, like the other down-stairs, had her little picture against the wall, and had been curtsying and crossing herself before it, in honest prayer for the dying old lady, to whom Monsieur Droqville whispered something, and then leaned his ear close to her lips. He felt her pulse, and said, "Madame has some time still to meditate and pray."

Again his ear was to her lips.

"Doubt it not, madame. Every consolation."

She whispered something more; it lasted longer, and was more earnest this time. Her head was nodding on her shoulders, and her eyes were turned up to his dark energetic face, imploringly.

"You can't do that, madame; it is not yours. You have given it to God."

The woman turned her eyes on him with a piteous look.

"No, madame," he said, sharply; "it is too late to withhold a part. This, madame, is temptation—a weakness of earth; the promises are to her that overcometh."

Her only answer was a hysterical whimper, and imperfect sobbing.

"Be calm," he resumed. "It is meritorious. Discharge your mind of it, and the memory of your sacrifice will be sweeter, and its promise more glorious the nearer you draw to your darkest hour on earth."

She had another word to say; her fingers were creeping on the coverlet to his hand.

"No, madame; there won't be any struggle; you will faint, that is all, and waken, we trust, among the blest. I'm sorry I can't stay just now. But Father Edwyn is here, and Doctor Garnet."

Again she turned her wavering head toward him, and lifted her eyes as if to speak.

"No, no, you must not exert yourself; husband your strength—you'll want it, madame."

It was plain, however, she would have one last word more, and a little sourly he stooped his ear again.

"Pardon me, madame, I never said or supposed that after you signed it you were still at liberty to deal with any part; if you have courage to take it back it is another matter. I won't send you before the Judge Eternal with a sacrilege in your right hand."

He spoke quietly but very sternly, raising his finger upward with his eyes fixed upon her, while his dark face looked pale.

She answered only with the same helpless whimper.

He beckoned to the nun.

"Let me see that book."

He looked through its pages.

"Read aloud to madame the four first elevations; agony is near."

As he passed from the room he beckoned the lady in the religious habit again, and whispered in her ear in the lobby, "Lock this door, and admit none but those you know."

He went down this time to the front drawing-room, and entered it suddenly.

Mr. Carmel was seated there, with candles beside him, reading. Down went his book instantly, and he rose.

"Our good friend up-stairs won't last beyond three or four hours—possibly five,"

began Monsieur Droqville. "Garnet will be here in a few minutes; keep the doors bolted; people might come in and disturb the old lady. You need not mind now. I locked the hall-door as I came in. Why don't you make more way with Miss Ware? Her mother is no obstacle—favourable rather. Her father is a mere pagan, and never at home. And the girl likes you."

Mr. Carmel stared.

"Yes, you are blind; but I have my eyes. Why don't you read your Montaigne? 'Les agaceries des femmes sont des declarations d'amour.' You interest her, and yet you profit nothing by your advantage. There she is, romantic, passionate, Quixotic, and makes, without knowing it, a hero of you. You are not what I thought you."

Mr. Carmel's colour flushed to his very temples; he looked pained and agitated; his eyes were lowered before his superior.

"Why need you look like a fool? Understand me," continued Monsieur Droqville, in his grim, harsh nasals. "The weaknesses of human nature are Heaven's opportunities. The godly man knows how to use them with purity. She is not conscious of the position she gives you; but you should understand its power. You can illuminate, elevate, save her."

He paused for a moment; Mr. Carmel stood before him with his eyes lowered.

"What account am I to give of you?" he resumed. "Remember, you have no business to be afraid. You must use all influences to save a soul, and serve the Church. A good soldier fights with every weapon he has—sword, pistol, bayonet, fist—in the cause of his king. What shall I say of you? A loyal soldier, but wanting head, wanting action, wanting presence of mind. A theorist, a scholar, a deliberator. But not a man for the field; no coup d'œil, no promptitude, no perception of a great law, where it is opposed by a small quibble, no power of deciding between a trifle or an enormity, between seeing your king robbed, or breaking the thief's fingers. Why can't you see that the power that commands, is also the power that absolves? I thought you had tact. I thought you had insinuation. Have I been mistaken? If so, we must cut out other work for you. Have you anything to say?"

He paused only for a second, and in that second Mr. Carmel raised his head to speak; but with a slight downward motion of his hand and a frown, Droqville silenced him, and proceeded.

"True, I told you not to precipitate matters. But you need not let the fire go out, because I told you not to set the chimney in a blaze. There is Mrs. Ware, her most useful position is where she is, in equilibrio. She can serve no one by declaring herself a Catholic; the *éclat* of such a thing would spoil the other mission, that must be conducted with judgment and patience. The old man I told you of is a puritan, and must see or suspect nothing. While he lives there can be no avowal. But up to that point all must now proceed. Ha! there goes a carriage; that's the third I have heard—Lady Mardykes's party breaking up. The Wares don't return this way. I'll see you again to-morrow. To-night you accomplish your duty here. The old woman up-stairs will scarcely last till dawn."

He nodded and left the room as suddenly as he had entered it.

JOHNNY FORTNIGHT.

Yes, that's my name, and I'll bet ninety-nine out of every hundred of you never heard it before. But you know who I am for all that. Londoners call me the tally-man; East-enders, I mean, and other unfashionable folk, for of course Belgravia and Tyburnia know me not, any more than they know several other tribes who prey as I do on the dwellers in those parts of London which the swells have only heard of.

Down near the Land's End I'm called Johnny Fortnight. They're fond of queer names down there; they call a little beer-shop a kiddle-a-wink; a bed is a ty; the industrious ant is a murrian; a mail is a boolawn; a well a peeth (puteus my friend the national schoolmaster suggests); a root a mohr; a mine a bal; and I might go on with a page of queer words, for the people are Cornish. They sing their words; and, although a cockney would catch their meaning far sooner than that of a Zummergeat or Dosset or Devonshire labourer, he would notice, besides the queer words, a lot of queer phrases, such as "Good-night upon you," betokening difference of race.

Is it this difference which makes them call me Johnny aforesaid? No, the reason is that I make them pay for what they buy of me at the modest and equitable rate of a shilling weekly, and their constant effort is to put off payment till the week after, so, whereas I wish to be Johnny Weekly, they

desire to make me what they have taken to call me.

For the rest, I am a most respectable individual. If you met me with my well-combed beard (usually "sandy"—red, say my detractors); my unimpeachable scarf, as neat, breast-pin and all, after a dozen miles on the tramp, as when I started from home; my well-polished boots, which I always manage to keep clean—one can do it in West Cornwall, for even weather like this can't turn pounded granite into mud; my trim leggings; and my pack, which, with its apparatus of straps and the indispensable stick, is a sight to see, you'd never believe that I am the representative and lineal descendant of that dirty, tricky, slouching old Autolycus, the pedlar.

Yes, I'm highly respectable; it wouldn't pay to be otherwise. Do you think my customers would believe me if I was as untidy as little Penrose, the draper in St. Fusty Churchtown, or as unpretending as poor old Mrs. Penaluna, who has been measuring out tapes and staylaces and yards of flannel for the last forty years to a few dullards among the Carn Brea folks? I have a fine presence, what the newspapers call a good physique; and I, the particular I who now write, am a well-known and appreciated "local." It pays, that does; and I am not the only man who takes to it (say the worldings) for that very sufficient reason. Ain't most of the pursers of mines "locals," and many of the "mine captains" to boot, and many of the little great men who put their money "out to use" among the farmers? You see the people trust us a deal more when we're pretty high up in "the church;" and it's so good to be trusted, especially if you have to sell anything that parties must take your word for. And, besides, we know our men and women more, and get a hold on them such as we couldn't get in any other way. The thing is to be a class-leader; one of your class'll always come to you, no matter what his trouble is; and when people do that it gives you many ways of quietly pushing your business. Bless you, you've no idea of the queer things class-leaders are called on to do. I was standing one night near upon twelve o'clock (it was years before this new Act) under the portico of the Commercial Hotel up to St. Fusty, smoking my evening pipe—why shouldn't I take my ease at my inn? Johnny hadn't been some seven years at work without having pretty well lined his purse, I can tell you. Well, I'd come out to have my smoke, and to freshen up a bit after

the dampness of the St. Fusty commercial room, when down the side street I heard a strange noise. It was a blind alley, blocked at the end by a low wall, over which many people in the daytime made a thoroughfare. I looked round the corner, and saw a man, evidently more than half drunk, trying to feel a gap in the wall, and asserting at each failure that it was "blessed" strange he couldn't find his way, what with the moon and all. He talked loudly enough to rouse the neighbours; and pretty soon a door opened, and a clear decided voice, as of one used to command, called, "Who are you, making this piece of work at this time o' night?" Whereupon our inebriated friend began, in the old miner's drawl: "Oh, young Pusser, don't 'ee be angry now. You do knaaw me. I'm James Trembaath up to Ballosinny; worked at the blacksmith's shop this more nor twelve year. Yes, you do knaaw me. I was in youre class for years, young Pusser. And then I took to takin' a drop too much; and that's what I done this night, and now can't find my way home. But you do knaaw me, young Pusser; and there, if you'll show me the way home, I'll tell 'ee what, I'll give 'ee a shilling for the missionairies." Exeunt purser and blacksmith, leaving me to reflect on the strange tie between "leader" and class, and on the possible advantages therefrom to a man in my line. Yes, I must manage to be a class-leader before long; and then if I take a missus and open shop somewhere, as well as going my rounds, I shall do double as well as I could without leadership to help me.

I'm a "local," as I said, and I'm very proud of that same. I'm not one of them that hold to colleges and all that for training to the ministry. Of course the parson he's all dark, that's what you might expect. I've been to hear him, times, and he always speaks, to my thinking, like one who fancies there's something to be said on t'other side; and that'll never do, you know, in religion no more than in politics. No half-measures for me; none of your folks with an aggravating sort of conscience that makes them think, and hesitate, and ask themselves questions. I hate crotchety preachers, just as much as crotchety parliament men. I like a man that goes straight forward, as if he could see the goal ahead, and didn't care to look at anything between him and it. And that's what our young men out of the colleges are getting too fond of doing. Between you and me, they're getting almost as bad as the parsons. But I know

what I've got to say, and I say it; and there's the Book to back me, and if they've anything to say against the Book, why they'd better not say it to me, that's all. I go ahead when I get on a text; I've read Spurgeon till I flatter myself I've formed my style on his—on the best part of his, of course.

Yes, I'm highly respectable; I am so by the confession of the head of all the Johnnies in this half of the county. He's a Scotchman is M'Clutchy; a good many of us are Scotchmen, though they mostly leave Presbyterianism on the other side of the Border. Fine fellows, those Scots: I admire them, though I'm not one of them;—"missionaries" (as I called them at a quiet soiree some score of us had last Twelfth Day at Camborne) carrying with them "the gospel of trade." A great hit I think that was. And then I drew an eloquent contrast between those early missionaries, Saint Perran, Saint Leven, Saint Senan, and Company, whose names have filled the land, and who brought with them but an imperfect creed, which had to be trimmed at the Reformation, and further altered by glorious John Wesley, and ourselves, who carry the perfection of modern fabrics round to the most outlying cottages. Truth in stuff is at least as grand a thing as truth in word; and that is what we persistently preach. How we practise it those must say who buy our articles. One thing we certainly don't do; we never condescend to the shop tricks about the three farthings or elevenpence halfpenny lightly pencilled on when the shillings are as big as half a window-pane. We should be ashamed of such a clumsy contrivance. "No; there's the price, mum; and if you like it you needn't pay all at once, you know. A shilling a week is my rule. Can't make up that? Well; they must be poor gettings where the wife can't save that much out of her marketings. You think the stuff's well enough. It is, indeed, you may take my word for it. If you was to go to Truro, you'd find that's just what all the tip-top county people are wearing now; and doesn't it suit your face too? Black hair and eyes—why, I can almost light my pipe at them," said I, suddenly remembering an old story. "Come, then; if you've set your heart on it you shall have it, as far as I can help you to it. A shilling to start with for a dress like that, and only nine shillings for the whole of it. We'll drop next week; that's as fair as any one could say; and you shall give me a couple of shillings the week after.

There'll be a 'general pay' betwixt this and then, and, unless it's a very bad month indeed, you'll easily manage that much, and nobody the wiser."

That was how I began my first deal with Mrs. Bosanco, in a lone cottage up on the moor behind Nether Bosperrow. She was a rosy country girl, not well "out of the teens of years," with a baby of some six weeks old, her husband working "under tribute" in Wheel Conscience. Things were looking well with them; he'd brought home six pounds last month, a vast sum for a Cornish miner, though our Scotchmen tell me it is just nothing compared with the wages upwards. The poor damp cottage looked as bright and cheerful as stoneware spaniels and groups of Burns and Highland Mary, and cheap glass plates on the mantel-shelf, and German prints on the walls could make it. I thought I knew every inch of my beat as well as a government surveyor; but some of these German pedlar chaps had clearly been beforehand with me. Fact is, Bosanco's house had been empty for years, and I thought, till somebody told me, that it was empty still. But trust those Germans to find out where money is to be got; and they never give credit, so the cruel wretches often make a clear sweep, carrying off every shilling along with the rest of the ready cash. I hate them on artistic grounds. I have my feelings, and I hope I'm not insensible to the beauty of a good engraving. It's just that which makes me so mad to see frightful caricatures of well-known prints stuck about in all the cottages I go into. What can our "societies" be about that they don't do something to raise the popular taste, or at least to hinder the Germans from depraving it? Tracts! We're overdone with them. I can pick enough up any Sunday about the lanes to keep me in pipelights for the rest of the week. How much better to get the Art Union to let them reprint their outlines of the Pilgrim's Progress, and of the Ancient Mariner, and two or three more, and sell them for next to nothing—send them round ready-bound with the book-hawkers. I'd warrant they'd get a sale.

But this is a digression; it shows you that I have my feelings, and that I can be righteously indignant, especially when fellows that I look upon as interlopers flood the country with what is in itself detestable. Besides, look at many of their wares. The Cornish are highly decorous, but I've seen bits of prints that it can never do a girl any good to look at, nor a

boy either, and that in rooms where the big Bible was on the little round table, nicely covered with an antimacassar, in the corner. There's another class of prints, too, bought, I fancy, for their glorious colours; these are simply the cheapest Romanist pictures, of which our unsophisticated folks don't know the meaning. I could show you half a dozen places where the Pope is execrated, and Rome held in reprobation, and yet on the walls are The Seven Colours of Mary, or the Sacred Heart. Yes; I am sure our "societies"—Tract and Christian Knowledge—might do a great deal with advantage in the way of pictures for the poor.

But I was telling you about Mrs. Bosanco. Well, she paid well enough that two shillings, and a shilling more, after letting another week drop, and then, after waiting a good bit, another couple of shillings; and then, without waiting to pay up all, what did she do but buy a pair of green glass ear-rings and a brooch to match—(these Cornish girls are all mad after jewellery; it's in the blood, I think)—and half a crown's worth of flowers—"real flowers" they always call the artificial ones, because they last longest, I suppose. I once had the honour of walking over three miles of moor alongside of Her Majesty's inspector of schools for our district, and he—a Cornish man, too—stuck up for this love of "flowers," and I think he even had a weakness for the rings and glass jewels; "it showed taste struggling against difficulties." I don't agree with him. It wouldn't do for me to give up selling what everybody wants to buy; but if I could afford to keep a conscience (as somebody says—you see I'm a well-read man, thanks to my Scotch friends for that), I'd never sell any of that rubbish any more; I've seen the harm of it, and know how often a fly-away hat full of flowers covers an uncombed head, and a gorgeous brooch fastens a torn dress with nothing but rags underneath it. And as to the mischief in other ways, young Blobbles, who's a "lady's man," could tell, and does tell, too, much about that; and I'm afraid more than half of it is true.

So, mind, I didn't try to sell those things to Mrs. B.; I only showed them with the rest of my stock, and she singled them out as a banker would a false note amid a pile of good ones. Buy them she would, and she'd manage the paying. And she did for awhile; but when her husband for three months brought home nine, and twelve, and eight shillings, and then went

up to fifty, and then down to two pounds, and stuck there for a twelvemonth, she having her second baby, and a long bout of fever, too, during the while, how could the poor woman pay, I should like to know? Of course my way was plain. I couldn't afford to lose; and so at last I had to tell her husband, and the storming rages he got into were enough to frighten a body. He wasn't going to pay her debts, he'd go to prison first; but he did pay a little, and then he could pay no more; he had debts at "shop," and little gettings, and so I was obliged to county-court him; and somehow he did get into Bodmin jail, as he said he would. What could I do? It wasn't my fault, you know. It's that horrid gambling plan that they call "tribute work." Nothing throws me out of my reckoning like that; there's no certainty in a man's pay. Where a man works "to wages" you know what he gets, and what his wife can afford, and in many parts (though seldom in this teetotal district) anything that's spent on your wares is saved from the beershop. But a tributer may get six pounds one month, and nothing at all the next. I was up at Hayle one day, and I met an old fellow I'd known years before as a miner taking in a load of early Cornish cabbages to sell. "Hallo!" said I; "them sort of things don't grow down in Wheal Kitty." "No," he rejoined; "no more Wheals for me. I had two-and-thirty years of it, man and boy; and how do you think I stood when I left off? Why, seven shillings on the wrong side, and one month I made as much as eight pounds. No more tribute work for me; I've turned market-gardener; it pays, and there's no miner's disease."

Let me explain this. In a mine the "grassmen" (surface workers), who look after the water, the stamps, &c., get wages from two pounds five shillings to two pounds ten shillings a month, rarely higher. The underground men are either "at tut-work," the ground being let out to the lowest bidder at so much a fathom, or "under tribute," in which case, after paying their share towards the working expenses, wear and tear of tools, &c., they get a previously-arranged proportion of the value of the tin which they have raised.

This "tut-work" is uncertain enough. The rock varies every few fathoms, and the men's constant complaint is that the mine captains won't set long bargains, for fear if a man has bought a hard bid dear he might come to a very soft bit before he made his length. A "tut" man sometimes

makes very little "when the ground do turn against him."

But "tribute" is as gambling as speculating in mine shares. A man may have a rich lode, and then his gettings are worth having. Half St. Fusty was built in that way by tributers in North Levant. But mines are poorer now-a-days, and mine captains are sharper. They take care to put all the rich lodes to tut-work, and if a man does make six pounds one month they're pretty sure to "cut him down" for three or four months to come.

That's why so many men have gone abroad. As soon as ever the high price of tin forced up wages a little, and so gave them a pound or two in hand, off they went to the immense disgust of pursers and captains. It was quite a stampede last spring. You see tribute is a poor life. Supposing a man only digs out rock and earth, his lode thinning out to nothing, why he doesn't receive a shilling at the month's end, and has his candles, tools, powder, and mine dues to pay for out of his capital if he has any. An abominable system and keeping the men slaves to the shops, always in that wretched state of living from hand to mouth. It's just a trick to work poor mines that never ought to be worked at all, by taking the men into a partnership of the heads I win tails you lose sort. No mine ought ever to be kept on which can't afford to pay fair weekly, not monthly, wages to its workmen; and since mines vary from richness to poverty, mines ought, to my thinking, to be worked by the State.

However, that's not the point; what I say is that tribute ruined the Bosancos, and has done me out of many an honest shilling. Honest, I say, for I'm, as I told you, a highly respectable individual; I'd scorn to do what half the miners in my county would delight in—promote a mine that was about as likely to pay the shareholders as to produce diamonds and gold nuggets. I wouldn't carry lumps of good rich ore in my pocket and drop them where the London gentlemen were coming to see if the ground looked promising. Miners do these things, though they're very religious men. One of them who had turned fish-hawker because his eyes had failed, told me he liked underground best because it gave him more time to attend the week-day evening means of grace. Very religious men; and yet they do strange things—things that I should scorn.

Yet, somehow, respectable as I am,

squire, and parson, and doctor, all look suspiciously on me; they say I sell bad goods, and charge twelve shillings for what could be bought at shop for six. They say I egg women on to extravagance, and make them deceitful, and so bring all sorts of evils on families; and that when a woman takes to cheating her husband about shillings she won't stop there. I don't know; I must leave it to you to judge, my candid public. Remember I'm a missionary of trade; what a grand title in this commercial country! I walk hundreds of miles in the year, in the cause of Manchester and Paisley and Birmingham. I'm a sort of Livingstone here in West Barbary, and as for cheating—not if I know it. Of course quality and all that's the buyer's look out. I'm not going to cry "stinking fish" to please any parson. I just act up to the exigencies of business (that's the phrase), and you know as well as I do, that every plate-glass tradesman of them all does the same. Do Messrs. Hookem and Squeezur rise above my level when they supply some Oxford mooncalf with a hundred pounds' worth of (mostly female) jewellery? Or is the mooncalf's tailor a pattern to Johnny Fortnights when he allows little suppers to be given in his house, and puts down the same, wine, cigars and all, in his bill as coats and waistcoats? I think I'm a good many ounts above that kind of work. I work hard for my shilling; and though I once overheard the parson of St. Fusty soundly rating a woman whom he'd been relieving, and where I'd just called to look after an old account, he didn't convince me that I got it dishonestly as things go. I don't say, with my prototype in Shakespeare, "What a fool is honesty;" but neither do I see why I should shut my mouth "when fortune drops booties into it." Do you, baker, who have been fined for short weight, or more adulterating publican, "call me rogue," an' you will. Like Autolycus, "I'm proof against that title"—at any rate, when bestowed by such as you.

THE LESSON OF THE BINDWEED.

UPON our Britain's western coast
 There grows a small green plant,
 Where the morning dews fall faint and few,
 Where the sap is chill and scant.
 It springs mid the waste of shifting sands,
 That border our low sea-shores,
 Driven before the winds that rave,
 When the great sea landward roars.
 Its tiny tendrils feebly clasp,
 Often and fiercely riven,
 The keen salt spray shakes off from them
 The pitying rains of heaven.

Yet, hour by hour, the pale green buds
 Fashion their graceful wreath,
 The fibres win a wondrous strength,
 From the sea-wind's gallant breath.

Till their patient strength a barrier forms,
 As the years go rolling on,
 That breasts the broad Atlantic's waves,
 On the hollow reaches thrown.

That baffles the might of the tempest,
 That bars the destroying deep,
 From the golden corn, and the clover bells,
 And the meadow's long rich sweep.

Never a work of man could do
 What that little plant achieves,
 Stronger than iron or stone may be,
 Those twining stalks and leaves.

So Fate and Sorrow, rolling on
 In sullen bitter clouds,
 Blotting all beauty, worth, and hope,
 From the world their gloom enshrouds,

Are pierced and brightened, slow and sure,
 By pure Love's quenchless ray,
 By the gentle act and the tender word,
 Winning their silent way.

Till the love of God, and the love of man,
 In their blending glory meeting,
 Show us, here, a life of patient Faith,
 And there, of bliss unflinching.

A SUCCESSFUL TRAGEDY.

"A PHENOMENON! Behold an officer of the Royal Irish, blushing to the roots of his hair!" said Captain Fitzmaurice, laughing, as the servant who had announced him closed the door, and left him tête-à-tête with Miss Marigold Cornish.

"And the reason?" inquired the young lady, settling herself with real curiosity to hear the confession comfortably.

"I thought your excellent uncle never would go!" said the young man. "I have been following his eccentric evolutions this half-hour, and have arrived, dear Marigold, at the conviction that—that lurking and dodging are decidedly not my line. As a detective I am nowhere. Listen. Mr. Cornish left the house with an air of resolution and business that completely threw me off my guard. I followed, and was all but spotted on the instant. Irresolution attacked him. He stopped, seemed about to return, did return a pace or two, resumed his way, halted, examined his left boot, lit a cigar, crossed the street, for the express purpose, as it seemed, of returning, dawdled, was about to march away, but became immovably fixed to the spot by—what do you suppose? A Punch!"

"My uncle is a fanatic in theatricals!" said Marigold, laughing.

"But Punch!"

"His views are liberal. From Macready to Punch, provided there be tragedy, my

dear uncle is a child in the drama's clutch. You have noticed that?"

"Perhaps," said Fitzmaurice. "But, on this occasion, dying with impatience, I——"

"I was impatient too," said Marigold, in a low voice. "Yes, Charles, I could not help writing. I was most anxious to see you, for a few moments, without the chance of interruption. I have had a conversation with my uncle, and——"

"He has relented!"

"Nothing of the sort. At first, he intimated that he did not wish me to marry at all."

"Did he vouchsafe his excellent reason?"

"He merely alleged, generally, that in his opinion, girls were happier unmarried. 'But suppose, uncle,' said I, 'one makes a love-match!' 'Lucifer-match!' said my uncle, 'spark, smoke, burnt fingers! Psha, my girl, there's no love after marriage.' That vexed me, and I said no more."

"Marigold, my darling, do you believe your uncle?" asked the young man, gravely.

"But, Charles, if it does happen so!" said poor Marigold, doubtfully.

"Never, never—that is, with a real love, a love like mine. There are people, dear, who have owned that they never knew what love was, till they had been three or four years his bound apprentices!"

"Ha," said Miss Cornish, a little startled at the boldness of the theory. "But, Charles, there is something else. When my uncle said he did not wish me to marry, he had (now, of this I am sure) a mental reservation—unless my choice were also his own."

"Has he some project, think you?" asked the young soldier, anxiously.

"I fear so."

"We must discover it," said Fitzmaurice. "Stay. Is not Sir Mordaunt Drury a great ally of his?"

"Yes; and of mine," replied Marigold; "he is joint guardian with my uncle, and can influence him much, if he will."

"He will—he shall—he must!" said the sanguine lover. "Does he call often? Why not send for him on the spot?"

The words had hardly left his lips when a short but imperative knock resounded from the street-door.

"That is he!" cried Marigold, clapping her little hands. "A hopeful augury!"

Unannounced—a fancy in which he was allowed to indulge—Sir Mordaunt Drury quickly rolled into the room. He was a

burly, rather military-looking, old gentleman, with a manner (so far as he found it practicable) formed on that of the late Duke of Wellington, whose costume, blue frock and white trousers, he invariably wore; and whose peculiar manner of returning salutes, with two fingers and a half, he had mastered to the very life.

"This is an early visit, my dear," he said, after shaking hands with both his young friends; "but duty—duty, as a great man said, before everything. Captain Fitzmaurice, consider yourself relieved. My business with our little commander-in-chief will be best despatched without your co-operation."

Fitzmaurice rose.

"On the contrary, dear Sir Mordaunt," interposed Marigold, quickly; "his presence is absolutely necessary. Do you know that we were about to send for you?"

"To send for me?" repeated Sir Mordaunt, rather suspiciously, as he looked from one to the other.

"To tell you a—a secret," faltered Marigold.

"Halt, there!" said Sir Mordaunt, in his most commanding tones. "I know the ground. You don't. Fitzmaurice, will you favour us?"

Once more the young man offered to retire. Again Marigold with an imperious gesture, forced him to remain.

"Ha!" said Sir Mordaunt. "As you will. Duty must be done, break what heads—hearts, I mean—we may. Fitzmaurice, I am a blunt old fellow, and a man of the fewest words. As my ward insists on regarding you as of our council, I have to inform you, sir, that I am here at the earnest desire of my old friend, her uncle, to prepare her for an offer of marriage, which meets with his entire approval."

"Marriage!" groaned Fitzmaurice.

"Approval!" echoed Marigold, faintly. "I—I think, you must have mistaken him, my dear sir," she presently added. "At least, I can assure you, that no later than last night, he remarked to me that he did not wish me to marry."

"Nor does he, for his own sake," replied her guardian. "The thought is most distasteful to him."

"Still, he might have told me himself——"

"My dear, he had not the pluck," interrupted Sir Mordaunt, hastily; "he knew it was his duty, but, my dear child, that lofty sense of duty which, in men of the

stamp of the illustrious Well—— Well, well, I mean that we cannot always answer to the spur. After leaving the house, this morning, he felt more than once tempted to return——”

“So I remarked,” muttered Fitzmaurice. “Punch decided it.”

“—And tell you all. As luck would have it, we met at the street corner. He told me all his trouble. I volunteered for the forlorn hope, and here I am, not a little surprised, I must own,” added the old baronet, “to find Captain Fitzmaurice in the breach before me.”

“And may I ask, Sir Mordaunt,” said Miss Cornish, haughtily, “who is the gentleman whose advances are so discreetly covered by your generalship?”

“Cannot you guess? Young, rich, well-looking, and accomplished. Nevertheless, so far as he is concerned, I don’t,” said Sir Mordaunt, “care an empty cartridge-case, whether he is successful or no. My duty ends with the breaking it to you—duty, I mean, to your good uncle, whose heart he has wholly won. It’s young Josiah Stichelbach.”

“Mr. Stichelbach!” echoed Marigold. “He never—we always—one sometimes——”

“Thinks him a donkey,” said her guardian, frankly. “It seems, however, that he can do one thing, which has made your uncle his own. You are aware of the latter’s partiality for the drama?”

“But Mr. Stichel——”

“Yes, he has,” snapped Sir Mordaunt, anticipating the doubt, “he has written what your uncle declares to be the finest dramatic effort of modern times. The hero is—a lobster!”

“A lobster!”

“Which,” continued Sir Mordaunt, “while it somewhat augments the author’s difficulties in dealing with the more sentimental passages, opens to the scenic artist, wardrobe-keeper, and property-man, a vista of triumphs hitherto sternly denied them (that’s from the preface). Now, my dear, you know your uncle’s opinion that a good tragedy being the highest effort of which the human intellect is capable, so the man who writes one might, if he pleased, secure a similar astonishing triumph in any other, and lesser line, to which his gigantic intelligence might stoop. Stichelbach’s piece is accepted, and will be produced, they tell me, so soon as a theatre can be erected of sufficient extent to do it justice. The cost of mounting it will not be excessive—some

thirty thousand pounds. Now, my dear child, it is no part of my duty to criticise your uncle’s tastes and opinions. I can only place the fact before you. This young fellow has succeeded in winning his admiration and regard, and to your own kind heart and sense of duty, I commit the result.”

There was dead silence in the room for a full minute after the conclusion of Sir Mordaunt’s speech. It was broken by Marigold, who, raising her sunny face from the hands that had concealed it, asked the singular question:

“Sir Mordaunt, you have seen this play of Mr. Stichelbach’s. Is it really an effort of genius? Would you, for example, class it with Shakespeare’s?”

“Ahem,” said Sir Mordaunt. “Well, Shakespeare, and Stichelbach, my love, are the lights of different ages. There are unquestionably points of resemblance, striking points! Josiah’s play is in five acts. So were Shakespeare’s. The Swan of Avon wrote in blank verse. In blankness, Josiah equals, if he does not beat him hollow. In exalted sentiment, it may be that—but my friend Cornish, you know, regards as the highest drama that which appeals most strongly, most directly, to the general sympathies. ‘Richardson, sir,’ he once remarked to me, ‘and, perhaps, Fitzball, were the greatest dramatists of the last generation. Has any one excited more emotion, provoked more sympathy, conjured up more terror, kindled more generous resentments, stimulated more desperate courage, than these great men? Show me, sir, a similar mastery over the seething passions of any audience in any theatre of our own day! Who was it that first taught us the true value, and influence upon society, of the theatrical ghost? Why, Richardson. Who proved that the addition of fetters and ochre—hitherto held incompatible with immaterial existence—only enhanced the filmy terror? Sir, Fitzball.’ And, my dear, to say truth,” concluded Sir Mordaunt, “our worthy Josiah seems to be much of that opinion.”

Miss Cornish rose, crossed the room, and took both her guardian’s hands in hers.

“Thanks, my dear friend,” she said. “You have told your story. Now you must hear ours.”

“Ours!”

“I have said that, when you luckily came in, we were about to send for you.”

“We!” repeated Sir Mordaunt, discontentedly.

"Charles and I. To entreat you, dear Sir Mordaunt, who can do as you please with my uncle, to learn from him whether he had not in his mind some marriage project regarding me."

"And I have done it, you perceive, very effectually!" replied the baronet, cheerfully.

"But—but this arrangement does not exactly suit us, dear!" pleaded pretty Marigold, with flushed cheeks and glistening eyes.

"It must," replied Sir Mordaunt, peremptorily.

"Why?"

"Duty, my love. 'Cornish expects that every niece—' Such was the sentiment, if not the precise words, in which the heroic Well—that is the immortal Nel——"

"But, dear Sir Mordaunt, Mr. Stichelbach is all but a stranger!"

"If Stichelbach were fifty strangers, and 'Charles,' as you style Captain Fitzmaurice, and yourself, had spooned and squabbled since babyhood, it comes to the same thing. If Fitzmaurice," added the old gentleman, rather regretfully, as he glanced at the handsome eager face of the young suitor, "had written a tragedy, then, indeed——"

"How can you say he has not?" asked Marigold, mysteriously.

"I!" ejaculated the young gentleman.

"Hold your tongue, sir," said Marigold, imperiously. "The modesty of these poets!"

"I never wrote a line since I was at college, worse luck!" muttered the lover disconsolately.

"Do you mean this, Marry?" asked good-natured Sir Mordaunt, visibly brightening. "Can Ch—pscha!—Captain Fitzmaurice do anything in that line? By George! if so, it might not be too late."

"My dear kind friend!" sobbed Marigold.

"Ay, ay, my love, that's all very well," said Sir Mordaunt, uneasily. "But business first. If Charley—hang it, Charles—will give us a scene, even a passage or so, from this drama, we will see what can be done. Come, sir, if ever memory answered to the spur, now is the time! Begin."

The young soldier coloured to the roots of his hair, hesitated a moment, then said:

"My dear sir, not even under such temptation can I bring myself to repay your trusting kindness with hypocrisy and deceit. I never——"

He was interrupted by the entrance of the footman.

"My master, Sir Mordaunt, sends his

compliments," said Mr. Jeames, "and would be 'appy to see you in his libery, as soon as convenient."

"There, that will give you time to send for the manuscript!" said the old gentleman, with a twinkle of mischief in his eye. "Or, at any rate, to collect your thoughts. I'll bring him up, never fear. But, mind you, the more high-flown and tragical the better. Hang the matter. Tone, sir, tone is all!"

And the baronet, with a glance of laughing encouragement, bustled away.

"Come, it is not so difficult after all!" said Fitzmaurice, gaining courage as he marched up and down the room. "Tone, eh!"

But the inspiration would not come. Tone, he found, was not, strictly speaking, the sum-total of what was required. A certain infusion of significance, of intelligibility, would be demanded, even by the enthusiastic admirer of Fitzball. In vain the unhappy young man smote his forehead, and rolled his eyes in the most approved fashion. Nothing would come. All the time poor Marigold watched the labouring bard, following every movement with wistful eyes; but forbearing the slightest interruption, lest some infant tragedy, destined to be the parent of so much joy, should perish in the moment of its birth.

Time, however, declined, even at the request of pretty little Marigold, to slacken his pace one instant. It seemed as if the sound of Sir Mordaunt's steps had hardly died away, when he was heard returning, chatting as he came, with the master of the house, who accompanied him. As they entered, Marigold thought the face of the former looked bright and encouraging.

Mr. Cornish shook hands with Fitzmaurice with some cordiality.

"I knew your father well, Captain Fitzmaurice," said the old gentleman, "and regret that I have seen so little of his son. My friend Drury tells me that you have desired a more intimate acquaintance, and it gives me additional pleasure to learn that your visit to my niece at this early hour was prompted by a desire to seek my assistance in a matter you have very much at heart."

"Ahem," said Captain Fitzmaurice. "Sir, I——"

"May I ask in what manner I can serve you, sir?" resumed the old gentleman a little stiffly.

Fitzmaurice glanced despairingly at his ally, Sir Mordaunt.

"He will never, Cornish, have the courage to tell you," observed the latter.

"Why so?"

"Come, man, out with it boldly," said Drury.

"Sir Mordaunt himself," said Fitzmaurice, "can best explain, I——"

"Well, Drury, explain," said Mr. Cornish.

"Come, then," replied his friend. "Fitzmaurice has heard of your attachment to the poetic drama, and——"

"Partakes it, probably?" exclaimed old Cornish, eagerly.

"Partakes it! Sir, he has written a tragedy!"

And Sir Mordaunt threw into the last word a solemnity that all but defeated its own purpose.

"A tragedy?"

"But, my dear sir," murmured Fitzmaurice apart to his too-zealous supporter.

"Don't be a fool!" was the answer, in the same tone.

"My dear young friend," said Mr. Cornish, "it will afford me the sincerest pleasure to hear you read your piece."

"With all my heart!" replied Fitzmaurice, growing desperate. "Any day. Suppose we say—Monday fortnight!"

"Monday fiddlestick!" said old Cornish, impatiently. "My good sir, why not now?"

"I—I haven't got it with me."

"We'll send for it!" exclaimed the enthusiastic old gentleman. "Ring, my dear."

"It is of no use, believe me," said the persecuted poet. "I have—ahem—lent it to a lady."

"Provoking! But I was not aware, Captain Fitzmaurice, of this talent of yours," said Mr. Cornish.

"Nor I either!" muttered the young gentleman.

"Can't you remember a few passages?"

"Yes," put in Sir Mordaunt, "like these you recited to-day!"

Fitzmaurice darted a glance of anger at his tormenting friend.

"Sir Mordaunt is jesting," he said, slowly. "He knows I have no memory."

"Nonsense. Only shyness. Say anything, man," added Sir Mordaunt, under his breath.

"Listen, now, Marigold," said her uncle, settling himself comfortably to hear.

"Indeed, I shall," said Marigold, smiling.

Fitzmaurice rose reluctantly.

"Well, since I must——" he said.

"He seems already rapt in his sub-

ject," said Sir Mordaunt, apart to his brother-guardian.

The latter nodded.

Throwing himself into an attitude, and employing the lowest tones he found convenient, Captain Fitzmaurice intrepidly began:

"In these deep solitudes and awful cells——"

"That sounds Pope-ish, doesn't it?" observed Mr. Cornish.

"Your motto, eh?" said Sir Mordaunt. "But come to your own, my boy!"

"Certainly, certainly. Where was I? Ah!

Umbrageous barren shades—without a leaf!
To your mild ears do I confide my grief."

"Good," remarked Mr. Cornish. "But a teaser for the artist! Leafless shade? Keep your leaves on—it's better."

"My dear sir, by all means," said the poet. "With the greatest pleasure. I proceed:

A heart inflexible—a rigorous sire—
Shower their dire ire upon my higher desire."

"Too many ires, eh?" suggested Mr. Cornish.

"The scene's in Ireland, you know," put in Sir Mordaunt, boldly. "Unities of the drama."

"Ah," said his brother critic.

Captain Fitzmaurice, warming to his work, proceeded:

"Lapt in Elysium (how should I doubt it?)
Come forth, sweet shade—ahem—and—and——"

"Tell us all about it?" prompted Sir Mordaunt, laughing. "Some affection, but more curiosity, I should say."

"Have the goodness, Drury, to reserve these remarks, at least until we have heard more of this very singular piece," said Mr. Cornish, warmly. "Pray, sir, proceed, and excuse the interruption."

Sir Mordaunt rubbed his hands, and glanced triumphantly at his ward.

"I am only giving you fragments, you see," said the poet:

"And, oh, forgive me, princess all too dear!
The fatal love that brought you, me, that is, one
of us——"

"Both of you, of course, 'here,'" said the baronet.

"Now, pray, Drury be quiet," remonstrated his friend. "This is, perhaps, the crisis of the play."

Fitzmaurice made another plunge:

"While round your brows the rays of glory glisten,
Angelic sprite! be kind enough to listen."

"Politely put," remarked Sir Mordaunt.

"Excellent!" said Mr. Cornish.

"Now comes the passion!" resumed Fitzmaurice.

"How! Dost thou fly me?"

"Magnificent!" exclaimed Cornish, excitedly:

"—What is that I see?

A rival, as I live! 'Tis he! 'Tis she!"

"Who?" asked Sir Mordaunt.

"Pray, pray, be quiet!" urged his friend. Fitzmaurice pretended to draw a dagger.

"Death, to my succour!"

"Good, good!" shouted the enthusiast. "It makes one shudder!"

"Let him die in peace," advised the baronet. "Down with your curtain!"

Fitzmaurice took the hint:

"—Fold me in thy pall,

Forget me not—think of me—think—That's all."

Mr. Cornish started up, and caught him by both hands:

"My dear young friend," exclaimed the excitable old gentleman. "I am as much astonished as delighted at your powers. A man who, at your years, can not only write, but act—yes, sir, act—is a phenomenon, indeed, in this age. It is true, I did not clearly understand, could not closely follow, the—the plot. But that was my fault. Emotion——"

"My good friend," said Sir Mordaunt. "Surely you understood that it was a prince, who——"

"Yes, yes, a prince. In love."

"Exactly. To whom a certain cruel guardian had refused his ward."

"A selfish, tyrannical guardian. I see. It is a fine situation, finely delineated."

"No wonder. The writer has felt it."

"How—like the unfortunate prince?"

"Just so. And, can you guess who is the tyrant?"

"Who could play the tyrant in such a case?" asked Mr. Cornish, his eyes yet twinkling with recent tears.

"Yourself!"

"I! I detest all tyranny. The domestic worst of all. There is less appeal."

"If so, you pity the oppressed and the deserving. Here they are," said the old baronet, taking a hand of each of the young people. "Cornish, we were about to make a serious mistake. Charles Fitzmaurice loves our Marigold, who returns his affection. You would have known it long before, but for the terror your iron rule (you wicked old tyrant, who 'detest all tyranny') has inspired. Now, unless you relent, what will you call yourself?"

"When a man's allies turn against him," said old Cornish, "the game is usually up. If

Blucher, instead of pursuing the French from Waterloo, had ridden up to your idol, the duke, and said, 'My dear duke, I am sorry to thwart your plans, but our feelings have changed, and Bulow is at this moment attacking your rear,' there would probably have been a row. Drury, Drury, you have thrown me over! And Stichelbach——"

"My dear old friend," replied Sir Mordaunt, "you must at least admit that Charles Fitzmaurice possesses equal advantages with Mr. Stichelbach, with the additional claim of having at least ascertained the young lady's disposition as regards himself—a precaution Mr. Stichelbach disdains."

Cornish paused for a moment.

"Well, well, be it as you wish," he said, at length. "And, Fitzmaurice," he added, smiling, "when this play is produced, as it cannot fail to be, you may reflect that to your own genius and industry is due——"

Fitzmaurice, who had spoken a word apart to his Marigold, came forward at this moment, and took the old gentleman's hand. His colour was heightened as he said:

"My dear sir, your frank and generous conduct severely reproves the little deceit that (under strong temptation, you must allow) I ventured to practise upon you. With shame and regret, I have to own that I never wrote a line of tragedy in all my life."

"What, sir! These passages not your own!" roared the old gentleman, excitedly.

"Oh, these! Of course, of course, but——"

"There, that will do" (and he sat down, with a beam once more on his benevolent face). "Sir, the man that could improvise such lines, could write at leisure a noble drama! Take your prize. I shall miss you, my love," he added, embracing his pretty ward; "but it's no matter. Marry the poet my dear Marry."

THE PIGMIES OF SYLT.

WHEN the Frisians first arrived in the island of Sylt, near Schleswig, they found there a whole race of little people, who chiefly dwelt in caves about the heath, and were therefore called the Underlings. The life of these pigmies was simple, but very jovial. They wore red caps on their heads, chiefly lived on berries and shell-fish, varying these sometimes with birds and shell-fish, which they caught for themselves.

The knives, hatchets, and battle-axes which they used were of stone, ground by their own hands, and they made pots of the same material. Generally, however, they disliked work, loving better to dance upon their mountains in the bright moonlight, and to supply their wants by theft. They would indeed pilfer whatever came within their reach, not excluding women and children; and they had, too, a knack of changing their own children for those of other people. Without exception they were all heathens, and great adepts in witchcraft, and could transform themselves into various kinds of animals. As evil destiny would have it, the fortunes of these merry mischievous dwarfs became mixed up with those of the merman, Ekke Nekkepenn, though there was no relationship between them. Ekke indeed was a malignant being of huge size.

His first adventures were with ordinary mortals. The crew of a ship sailing to England through a terrific storm that threatened them with immediate destruction, were much astonished when they saw a large human form rise before them out of the sea, and heard it request to speak to the captain. When the captain appeared upon deck, the spectre explained that he was a merman, whose proper abode was at the bottom of the sea, that his better half was on the point of increasing the marine population, and that if the captain's wife would come to her assistance, he would be infinitely obliged. The captain's very natural reply that he could not allow his wife to do anything of the kind diminished the merman's civility, and he roundly declared, that if his petition was refused, the lady below would stir up the billows so furiously that the destruction of the ship would be inevitable. Fortunately the captain's wife, who had overheard the conversation, bravely resolving to sacrifice herself to the captain and his crew, leaped without hesitation into the raging waters, and disappeared with the merman.

The storm ceased at once, but the captain was disconsolate till he heard from the depths below an old Frisian lullaby song, showing that a child had been born beneath the water, and that, consequently, he need not despair of seeing his wife. And, sure enough, she soon emerged from the sea, and returned to the ship, scarcely wet, with an apronful of gold. This had been the merman's reward for the assistance given to his consort. The rest of the voyage was fair, and the captain reached land in safety; but when he set sail again he left his wife at his home in Rantum.

Mermaids can grow old as well as other people, and after a lapse of years it struck the merman that his wife Rom had become exceedingly aged and ugly, and he be-thought himself of the beauty of the captain's wife without reflecting that she must grow old too. The appearance of the well-known ship sharpened his evil inclinations, for it seemed to him that he might conveniently desert his wife, destroy the captain by means of a tempest, and secure the lady. So with a hypocritical face he told Rom that he was going to catch a few herrings, and asked her to grind some salt that they be duly pickled. The good old dame obeyed her lord, and the result of her salt grinding was so tremendous a maelstrom that the ship, with all her crew, was at once sucked into the vortex. His happy plan having proved so far successful, the merman swam ashore, and walked along the coast, in sailor's attire, till he met with a young damsel, who was, in fact, the captain's daughter, Inga, exceedingly like her mother, as she looked in bygone days. This, then, was the object of his thoughts, and he began to talk to the maiden in a gallant style, which she did not at all appreciate. However, he contrived to put a golden ring upon her finger, and a golden chain about her neck, and declared that in three days she must be his bride, if she did not discover his name. He then released her, and she promised to meet him on the following evening. All the intervening time she passed in endeavouring, by dint of inquiry, to learn the name of her unwelcome admirer. Inquiries, however, proved but vain, and she walked dismally to the trysting-place, where she fancied that she heard the voice of some one singing in the mountain. These were the words:

"To-day I'll brew, to-morrow bake,
And all for lovely Inga's sake,
Who soon will be my bride.
My name is Ekke Nekkepenn;
I know it well myself, but then
'Tis known to none beside."

"Aha," cried she, recognising the voice of her adorer. "You are Ekke Nekkepenn, and I am Inga, of Rantum, and there I mean to remain." She immediately ran off, but neglected to return the ring and the chain.

Ekke vented his rage on all the people of Rantum, his practical jokes being of the most extensive kind. Ships were sunk without mercy, the old lady at the bottom of the sea catching the bodies of her victims in a net.

The direful failure of Ekke Nekkepenn

with the maiden of Rantum caused him to turn over in his mind what he had heard about the little people who resided on the heath, and he asked himself whether by chance he might not have a better chance with an Underling than with a Frisian. He bent his steps in the right direction, and, in a hill situated in the Red Cliff, towards the northern extremity of Sylt, settled himself in a cavern, and began to woo a fair dwarf in good earnest. But here his case was worse than at Rantum, for Inga had at least treated him with respect, whereas the sharp little creature insulted him to his face. In his perplexity he called on King Finn, the absolute sovereign of all the Underlings, who resided in the Giant Hill on the heath, and who happened to be in an excellent temper, having just married a lovely Frisian girl of Braderup.

Ekke, surprised at the king's success under circumstances which he had found so unfavourable, and thinking that example might be more instructive than precept, asked for the particulars of the wooing, and his request was readily accorded. The women of Sylt were commonly subjected to much hard labour, and King Finn had been informed that a certain damsel of Braderup had once expressed to a female friend her envy of the Underlings, who passed the greater part of their time in dancing and singing. As this damsel once passed the hill where he resided, he seized on the opportunity to ask if she really meant what she had said. A hearty "yes" was the reply, and the same answer was made to his request that she would remain where she was, and become his wife. Most magnificent was the feast held in honour of the wedding. The dwarfs, invited from every part, brought each a present, one a pipkin full of berries, another a thimbleful of milk and honey, a third a mouse-trap, and so on, and splendidly were they regaled with herrings'-roe, salted eggs, oysters, and mead. The king was enthroned on the Sesselstein, the stone whence he derived his power, wrapped in a cloak of mouse's skin, and crowned with a diadem of jewels in the shape of a sea hedgehog, and by him sat his young queen, dressed in a garment apparently made of the wings of moths, with a wreath of flowers interspersed with diamonds on her head, and a ring on every finger.

When he heard of the happiness that resulted from King Finn's marriage, the emulation of Ekke Nekkepennu was fired, and he thought that he, too, might pos-

sibly be fortunate if he tried his hand at Braderup, although he had failed at Rantum. So thither he proceeded, and violently seizing a young maiden, who usually wore male attire, that she might not be carried off by the Underlings, refused to let her go till she had solemnly promised to become his wife within a year and a day. And now he might have been as happy as King Finn, had it not been for his foolish habit of singing aloud about the peculiarities of his own name. Night after night, in the neighbourhood of Braderup, he roared out the choice verses cited above, with the difference, that for "lovely Inga" was substituted "Dorte Bundis." This was overheard by the good folks of Braderup, who were very much annoyed, and guarded their wives and daughters more vigilantly than ever, determined that the Underlings should not repeat their old tricks with impunity. As for Ekke, they drove him from his cavern by a forcible appeal to his nostrils; piling before the entrance such a quantity of dead animals, that the place bears to this very day a name referring to the combination of ill smells.

He returned deeply humiliated to King Finn, who showed but scant sympathy. When he had captured the girl, he should have held her fast, whereas, like a sea-calf as he was, he must needs sing his stupid song, and thus throw away all his chances. That was of no great consequence. Much more serious was the consideration that, by his lubberly conduct, he brought all the Underlings into discredit, though really they held themselves irresponsible for him and his blunders. Let him go to Hörnum (the southern branch of the island) or to the sea; with the smart little fellows on the heath, he was too stupid to associate. To this effect spake King Finn, whereupon Ekke lost his temper, declared that he was as good a man as the speaker, and seating himself on the Sesselstein, asserted that he thus became king of all the Underlings in lieu of Finn, until some strong hand could remove him. Finn answered this boast by dealing a blow at Ekke's head, which extorted from him a grunt, but did not move him in the least. He therefore threatened to bring his stone axe, but Ekke vaunted the thickness of his own skull, and defied him to do his worst. The axe was brought, but before it was used, Finn said to his queen, who some weeks before had presented him with an heir, that a ship was moored in the neighbourhood, manned by a troop of monkeys, who played all sorts of diverting tricks. If Ekke would kindly

take care of the baby, Finn and his queen would go to see the monkeys.

Now curiosity was one of Ekke's weak points, and at the first impulse, overlooking the extraordinary change from deadly enmity to confiding friendship, he leaped from the throne and declared that he would go too. This, thought Finn, was the time for using the axe, but Ekke had reconsidered the position, and leaped back into his seat. Still he was determined not to miss the sight, so when the king and queen had just started, he strapped the stone to his back, and trudged in the direction indicated, puffing and blowing as he went, till at last he felt so weary that he was forced to lay the stone on the ground, though he took good care to sit upon it. There he sat all night staring towards the sea, but not so much as a ship was to be seen, much less a crew of monkeys. Day broke, and at last a troop of dwarfs appeared dragging along a huge something, in shape like a barrel, but with a human head and the tail of a fish. As it approached, Ekke perceived to his horror that it was his old wife. He implored the dwarfs to pitch the old lady back into the sea; he insisted that, as he sat upon the Sesselstein, he was their lawful sovereign, and they were bound to obey him. But all to no purpose; the dreaded form came nearer and nearer, and he sprang into the water followed by his determined spouse. The Sesselstein is still to be found on the spot where he then left it.

By thus wisely forming an alliance with the lady Rom, the Underlings had got rid of a serious nuisance, but Ekke's expulsion had come too late. His misdeeds had brought the whole race of little people into greater disrepute than ever, and they were ill-used by the Frisians whenever they fell into their hands. The Frisians were of gigantic stature and the Underlings were dwarfs. Still, under the circumstances, some bold step must be taken, and Finn, though he knew that the removal of the Sesselstein had deprived him of authority, felt it his duty to summon all his subjects to a moonlight meeting on the heath, near the mountain which had been the royal residence. Every variety of Underling responded to the call, and when they had all assembled they quacked like ducks, while, from the interior of the mountain, the voices of the Underling women were heard squeaking like so many mice in a barn. When silence had been with difficulty obtained, Finn, modestly confessing that he was king no longer, narrated in detail the misdeeds of Ekke Nekkepenn, pointed

out to them the destruction that awaited them at the hands of the Frisians, and asked them to resolve, one and all, what, under this heavy pressure, was to be done. The unanimous resolution was for war; the valiant little creatures declaring that the time was come when they must sharpen their knives and their teeth, dig up their axes and hammers from the ground, and fight. The meeting then broke up, and every Underling went to his own home to prepare himself for the conflict.

The noise of the assembly had been loud enough to reach the ears of the people of Braderup, whose town is in the vicinity of the heath. Feeling that she had been the innocent cause of the increased disaffection between the two races by whom the island was inhabited, Dorte Bundis, before the dawn of the following day, crept by the Giant Hill. Laying her ear to the threshold of the door, she heard Finn's wife rocking her baby's cradle, and singing these words:

"Lullaby, lullaby,
Little baby do not cry;
To-morrow Father Finn will bring
A dead man's head, a pretty thing.
Lullaby."

These words, childish though they might be, were of evil omen, and Dorte Bundis thought there was no time to be lost. So she lighted a fire on a hill near Braderup, this being the signal recognised by all the Frisians of Sylt that war was at hand. Soon there was a general drumming and horn-blowing throughout the island, and there was not so much as a village in Sylt which had not its signal-fire.

The gathering of Frisians from every part of the island was tremendous, and as every one came in a hurry with the armour that lay within reach, costumes were various, though the prevailing fashion was sheepskin or sealskin, with now and then the addition of a cow or horse-hide. King Ring, sometimes called the Sea Giant, looked awful with a gilt hat shaped like a boat; but he was surpassed by King Bröns, of Keitum, who rode with his son, in a gilded coach, and was properly equipped with a cuirass of chain armour, and a gilt helmet with an eagle on the top. Bull of Morsum (on the eastern branch of Sylt) had decked himself with a cowhide, the horns of which, gilded, projected over his head. Big Urdig carried an iron flail. Niss, the smith of Morsum, a man "expert in his potting," bore on his back a barrel of beer, and that his weakness might not be betrayed to the profit of others, vowed that it was his drum. He betrayed himself by occasional refreshments, so the others persisted that

Niss should march in front, while they adhered to the barrel. Tjöl, of Archsum, being of a cautious disposition, brought with him the door of his barn, which he thought would serve as a shield of large dimensions. Sialle, a fisherman of Eidum, had peculiar notions of warfare. He had crept into the whole skin of a porpoise, the head of the fish projecting far beyond his own, and the tail dangling behind. The smell of this armour was not pleasant, but far from considering that a disadvantage, he declared that his raiment was not only defensive, but so extremely offensive, that, of itself, it would suffice to repel a far-scented foe. Kialburg, also a fisherman from Eidum, bore the jaw-bone of a whale, with which he hoped to work wonders. Unding and Wirk, both of Rantum, had an eye to contingencies, and their armour consisted of strips of dried skate, while a good broad, entire skate hung on their backs; for, they said, they did not know what might happen, and they did not wish to die of hunger, if the fight lasted long.

When they were all assembled on the heath of Tinnum, a council was held, and it was resolved that nothing less than the extermination of the Underlings would insure peace and prosperity. Bull of Morsum, the Eagle-King of Keitum, and Niss, the Morsum smith, were chosen as leaders, and Jaspar, also of great repute, had the office of showing the way. That his duties might be efficiently discharged, he carried in his hand a staff, surmounted by a dead crow long enough to be seen by all who followed. When they had crossed the heath in a northerly direction, they were encountered by the Underlings, who, heathens as they were, at first exulted when they saw that their foes had no cross upon their banner. However, the noise of the drums was unpleasant, Tjöl, with his barn-door, looked unsightly, and the two warriors from Rantum, and the hero of the porpoise sharply attacked their nostrils, so that the poor little things crept into their burrows like rabbits. King Bröns, however, had a great dog, and when this had driven them out of their caves, they were shot down without mercy.

The Underlings contrived to poison the dog, and their extreme despair inspired them with courage. If the Frisians were strong, they were also unwieldly, and the active little creatures crept under their clothes, and killed many with their knives and axes. King Bröns and his son both perished, and possibly the Frisians would have ignominiously retreated had not their

wives come to their assistance, and thrown hot gruel into the eyes of the Underlings. A total rout of the Underlings ensued, ending in complete extermination, and King Finn, who had found his Sesselstein, when the fight was lost, stabbed himself at sunset with his stone knife, that he might not survive his subjects.

The above strange story is of historical significance, and of several of the incidents monuments still exist in the names of many places of the Island of Sylt, now a favourite watering-place with the people of North Germany.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER X. A NEW ALLY.

THIS incident soon got abroad in Brickford. It was a delightful piece of excitement, and people began to take sides in the matter. Every one knew that Lady Duke had come back to rescue her child, and the success of her attempt could, indeed, be read in the downcast, rueful faces of the family. Still she had not gone away, and what was more to the point, her son was still in the town. The whole was canvassed in the keenest way, Mr. Duke having "behaved infamously" according to some; but, according to others, it having only served the whole party right. But these were the views of ladies chiefly, who admired from a distance the noble youth. Mr. Nagle bore himself through the streets and other public places with the demeanour of a martyr. But he made no alteration in his proclamations. "'Twas too late—the thing must stand or fall as it was." Mr. Nagle seemed to reckon that it would fall rather than stand, and with it all the fortunes of his house, and looked forward calmly to seeing the venerable Broadwood again in peril.

But the gallantry with which Will Gardiner took up the cause of the injured family was remarkable. He was obstreperous in his condemnation of the scurvy behaviour of his relative to a fine girl. "I declare," he said, "I could not have believed that Alf could have turned out such a pitiful skulker. She's a deuced deal too good for him." The only thing to be done was that all should strain every nerve, work heart and soul to make the affair successful, and the concert a bumper.

With this view he burst into the room of his relative, Old Doughty, whom he found, with his violin, absorbed in the

harmonies of the mighty Beethoven. An humble pianist of the town, such as Mr. Nagle would have described as "a mere stone-breaker, sir!" was thrumming an accompaniment at the piano. Will interrupted both. He boisterously insisted that something must be done for the Nagles. The other pettishly remonstrated.

"You are interrupting us. I can help no one. No one has ever helped me through life."

"That's good from you," said the intruder. "Where would your fiddle be but for the help you are getting from our friend there? Just lay it down a minute and listen to me. It's a very hard case."

In a very simple, natural way Will Gardiner began to pour out Corinna's story. He described the mortification, the humiliation of the poor girl, and the shabby, contemptible way in which her admirer had left her in the lurch. She had the noblest voice. The family were all musicians to the back-bone. The girl had shown a brave spirit, and let the fellow go without a word. Now something must be done. He, Old Doughty, knew plenty of "those German fiddlers who would come any distance for a pot of beer and a smoke." Could he not get them down to fill up the programme?

Mr. Doughty listened sourly to the depreciation of the members of his honoured craft, but still was interested. Anything about music had a dramatic interest for him. Will Gardiner saw his advantage, and pressed him hard.

"If you heard her sing—sing one of the melodies, or a thing out of a fellow called Gluck"—Mr. Doughty winced at the pronunciation where the composer's name rhymed to duck—"a song about Eurydice and Orpheus, my dear boy, you'd escape from your very skin."

"Ah! that's a song, indeed," said Mr. Doughty; "any one that could sing that—but it shows taste to have selected it. And she sings it well, slowly, solemnly, mysteriously, sadly?"

"Oh, I don't know about all that," said his friend. "But to hear her is enough to make you cry——"

"That is the reading," said the other, gravely. "But I am too busy now. Besides, you overrate my ability. I can do nothing for any one; I really cannot. I am not even a singer."

"Hang it! you can listen," said the other; "let me bring her up here; it will do neither you nor her any harm. Don't be ungallant, man alive."

Thus did he urge the matter, and so obstreperously, that at last he wrung a wearied consent from the other, who was panting eagerly to recommence that interrupted adagio.

"I'll bring her in half an hour," cried the enthusiastic Will, rushing away.

In the same eager fashion he burst in on the Nagles, who were dismally engaged in their preparations. Corinna was woefully disappointed when he revealed "that he had got the very thing that would do for them;" for she thought he brought what would be the only sort of good news for her. Mr. Nagle received it calmly and dryly; he had a contempt for the cultivated amateurs, whom he placed very low indeed in the musical hierarchy.

"It will do no harm," he said, "and it will be a civility to the gentleman. You may go, my dear. It shows a proper feeling on his part, and the more that rally round us the better."

Corinna, more from a wish to oblige her friend, than from any other motive, put her bonnet on, took her light roll of music, and set off with Mr. Gardiner.

They found Thomas Doughty in a curiously tightened little coat, bending over his viola, which lay nestling in its case, and which he seemed to be brushing or patting like a kitten in its nest. No kitten could have been as snug as that instrument; for it lay in a little bed of soft velvet nicely adjusted to its shape, with a richly quilted counterpane in which it was tucked up when put to bed. He raised his face as they entered, which was as anxious as that of any mother.

"Busy with the baby?" said Bill, noisily. "Here, I have brought a young lady to see you. Leave the wooden child alone, and attend to the handsome living——"

Mr. Doughty's thin lips tightened into a smile.

"I shall leave *you* alone," he said dryly. "Won't you sit down, Miss Nagle? Very few ladies honour me with a visit."

He was looking at her with a shy and curious interest.

"Oh," said Corinna, in her most natural way. "It is so kind of you to let me come, though I hear you are such a dreadful judge."

"Dear me, no! What nonsense the people do fill their heads with! Indeed, I confess to liking good old music, and some of the new, and can fairly judge of that; but as for pronouncing on the style of singing and playing pursued by the young ladies of the day, I confess I am utterly

unfit for that. I know nothing about it. They neglected my education." Corinna's speaking face told that she was mortified. He saw it. "Not that I doubt but that you are one that I shall like. You don't look like one of those who sit and work at their piano like factory girls at their frames. You have a charming musical face, suited to your name, Miss Corinna."

"'Pon my word, Doughty," cried Will Gardiner, "well said. You have done wonders, Miss Corry. He doesn't speak that way to his fiddles."

"What is your favourite song?" said Old Doughty, calmly ignoring this tone of his friend. "Do not sing one of those confectionery ballads—pray don't."

"No," said Corinna, eagerly, "not for the world! I dislike them as much as you do. I brought this—what I like to sing myself—though it is not as popular as it ought to be—the scene from Gluck's *Orpheus*."

"That shows taste. So far, so good. Even if you sing it badly, Miss Corinna, I shall say you are a musician."

Will Gardiner, afterwards recounting this meeting, declared that the old "Old Doughty," with all his dryness and cantankerous flavour, seemed to float away, and a soft, gracious, human-like being appeared to take his place. His voice, he said, became insinuating, his eye gentle, and he seemed altogether youngish, if not young. Further, Old Doughty said, in a hesitating way:

"If you would not mind, I should like to accompany you."

Corinna accepted eagerly, and the connoisseur, placing himself at the piano, began the sort of dejected symphony that heralds the song. His fingers, small and delicate, were those of a gentleman, and touched the keys with a graceful though not powerful touch. Then Corinna began. She drew herself up, and poured out her rich full tones, telling the fine story with a feeling worthy of the gifted Viardot herself. As she proceeded, the cold dry face lightened, and was turned to hers: the delicate fingers became firmer in touch: the two performers, reacting on each other, produced a result that kindled the enthusiasm even of Will Gardiner, to whom these severer efforts were usually unintelligible.

"You do sing," said Old Doughty, warmly, "and you are an artist!"

"That song would make one sing," said Corinna, enthusiastically.

"It is noble and genuine, the truest ex-

pression of the situation. I tell you what. You are going to have this concert. You must sing this, and if you would allow me I should be delighted to hobble after you with the accompaniment."

"Well, well," thought Will Gardiner, "what is coming to the man! He can't be in love with the girl, of a sudden. Old Doughty is not weak enough for that."

Corinna was not a little flattered at this testimony to her gifts. But there was something which Mr. Doughty was not aware of, and this lent the dramatic impression. "What shall I do without my *Eurydice*?" ran the words of the song, and these were poured from Corinna's heart. For she was thinking of how she had been deserted, and how the sad wail was exactly in tune with her own heart. "What should she do without her Alfred?"

Other pieces of the same classical kind were then attempted. Never was there a more delighted audience.

"Yes," said Old Doughty, now as eager as he had been before cold. "We must try and give a classical tinge to this concert. I could telegraph to the Steiners, two splendid cello and violin players, and have them down by to-morrow night. We might have one of Haydn's quartets."

Suddenly Corinna bethought her of her father, who looked more to popular than to classical music. Then there were the posters.

"Oh I never thought of that," she cried. "Papa has chosen what I am to sing—it must be something light and taking."

"What?" asked Mr. Doughty.

"Oh, the Dying Swan, and——"

"What, one of those vulgar ballads?"

"No, no, not vulgar," she said, colouring; "it is very effective and tuneful."

"Never mind, we shall settle all that. I'll see him myself. Going? Well, I hope to see you very often. You have a noble voice, and a noble style. And your face so reminds me of—— Well, good-bye, Miss Corinna."

Mr. Gardiner and his companion went their way.

"I declare, my dear, you have quite thawed Old Doughty!"

CHAPTER XI. COLD WATER.

WHEN Corinna and her friend arrived to report progress, and while Mr. Gardiner was descanting loudly on the success of their mission, Mr. Nagle listened with scarcely concealed indifference.

"Corinna produces that result very often, I can tell you; but, of course," this

sadly, "no one ever asks, 'who set the types?' But that would never do, oh never! Glück is well enough at the Classical Sawpits——"

"The Sawpits?" said Will Gardiner.

"Yes, you know what I mean—where they grind old fogey music, all grave as undertakers, working as if they had saws and planes in their hands." Then confidentially, "There's no money in it, sir—no money in it."

"Oh, indeed," said Mr. Gardiner, greatly impressed.

"As for your friend Doughty, he is, no doubt, a creditable amateur. But, my dear sir, all the amateurs in the empire, boiled down and melted together, wouldn't be equal to one of the trade. It's all poor, my dear sir, wants the real beef."

"I see," said Will; "no money in them."

Still, these were strange doctrines to come from Mr. Nagle, who only that morning had enlarged to Mr. Duke on the surpassing excellence of the amateur: "You have, my dear boy, what we have not," &c.

He went on: "As for getting down any German scrapers, I wouldn't do it—no, not if it brought fifteen pound ten more to the doors. It's well meant, I have no doubt," said he, graciously. "And if he likes to come here and make his little suggestions I see no objection."

That evening Old Doughty actually presented himself, and was received with a kind of condescending loftiness. Mr. Nagle had, in truth, the greatest contempt for what he called the "starved old bachelor" class, who had accomplishments but little money. They were no good, in any direction, he said; did not want lessons themselves, and rather preferred giving them; and had no daughters or sons to whom "instruction could be imparted."

The truth was, Mr. Nagle's musical erudition and acquirements had once been signally exposed by one of these gentry, and the outrage still rankled in his breast.

As for the German scrapers, he put them aside after his own fashion. "It was a very nice thought; but the pigtail business doesn't do."

Mr. Doughty was glancing over the posters still displayed. "You don't mean to say you are going to put a girl of her talent to sing rubbish like that, Dying Swans and such wish-wash nonsense?" and he pointed with his stick to the obnoxious ballad.

Mr. Nagle coloured. "Wish-wash, sir! As good judges as you, sir, have pro-

nounced it first class. Ay, and better, too, sir."

"And perhaps worse, too," added the other, dryly. "No offence. I have not heard the music, so none can be meant. But, I entreat you, I beg, do something in the interests of genuine music! Give your daughter some chance of distinguishing herself, and don't profane her noble voice and herself by such things. Do something for art, and don't turn it quite into a tradesman's business."

"Oh, my good sir," said Mr. Nagle, impatiently. "Don't teach me, pray, at my time of life; I am a little beyond that. No, we really can make no alteration in the programme. It must stand."

"But you know it is altered already, and does not stand," said the other quietly.

Corinna's eyes flashed, she drew herself up. Old Doughty saw what he had done, and actually coloured.

"I did not mean——" he said, his voice actually faltering.

"You did not mean?" said Corinna, with a scornful slowness.

"No, I did not," he said in a low voice, "so far as you were concerned. I am a dull and stupid solitary. However, as I may not help you, I must go."

"I am exceedingly obliged to you all the same," said Mr. Nagle, loftily; "but really I tell you frankly, you could have been of little use to us."

"I am inclined to agree with you," said the other, dryly. Then turning to Corinna, "I wish you would do that for me. I do not like the idea of genius like yours being profaned by flimsy ballads. It's immoral," he said, almost vehemently. "I would not see your beautiful robe trailing through the dirt."

Certainly, this Old Doughty was a very strange being, and Corinna looked after him, wondering, as he left the room.

On the next day one of Will Gardiner's stock stories at the houses he visited at, and to the people he met in the street and elsewhere, was the sudden change in Old Doughty. The man was transformed, he said; the girl was a witch. Had he not always said there was a secret charm about her? Any girl, of course, knew enough of her trade to captivate the young fellows; but to soften an old dried bit of timber like that, was a miracle. She was a perfect enchantress; and mark his words, one of these days, "she would snaffle a lord." Old Doughty had warm blood in him still, and he declared he began to respect him, now that he began to show

that he could admire a fine young woman like Corinna. He wished the old bachelor had a couple of thousand a year, and they could easily get up a match between the pair. At all events, he would go and ask Old Doughty to dinner again, and tell him that he had behaved like a man. All this caused a good deal of amusement among the Brickford folks. But all this while, Will Gardiner never lost sight of the main point, and forced his tickets on the people he met, as a conjuror would force his cards.

Notwithstanding the defection of Mr. Duke, who was sadly pronounced by Mr. Nagle to have shown the cloven hoof, the concert promised well. Nothing more gallant or heroic could be conceived than the bearing of Corinna, who, as she was confronted by curious female eyes in the streets and other public places, met their gaze with a haughty composure, though her heart was filled with mortification. For the last piece of news was that the faithless lover had indeed succumbed to maternal influence, and that they had both quitted the town. The lady retired in triumph, not merely bag and baggage, but with her captive also.

The night had now come round, and everything promised well. A handsome amount of tickets had been disposed of. Mr. Nagle was not to be spoken to, and seemed to be marked "dangerous." His eyes, as they encountered other eyes, peered into the mist beyond; of ordinary mundane things he seemed now to have no ken. He was spurring down to the rooms every hour, and appeared overpowered with quite a weight of business. As the hour of commencing drew near, at least two or three private carriages—for Brickford did not possess more—came driving up; and the large room, showing its staring white and circular gallery, standing propped on attenuated legs, like an old sideboard, gradually filled. There were reserved seats and stalls, and what Mr. Braham Nagle described, with infinite disgust, as "the shillings." Yet a good many of these obnoxious places were being secured with alacrity.

Now the performing party was dressing for the exhibition. An anxious moment—the fly waiting at the door—Mr. Braham Nagle investing his neck with a stiff George-the-Fourthian white neckerchief. Corinna

was waiting in the drawing-room, her music ready before her, and looking like some stately high-born maid. Her hair was bound with a golden fillet—magnificent hair it was—and, pale and scornful, she seemed like some inspired Grecian poetess. A thousand emotions were working within her. She was "heart sore," as her father would have said, chilled, but not crushed by the cruel desertion of her lover. They were too poor, she felt, for her to enjoy the luxury of dejection or despair; she had determined to stamp out all that was left of love; and on that night, at least, wipe out the mortification by a triumph. With this view she had formed a bold resolution. She *would* sing that song of the deserted Orpheus, wandering hopelessly desolate, *Che farò senza Eurydice*. Into that lament, at least, she would put her whole soul. As for miserable ballads, even the Dying Swan, she felt that she dare not attempt them. Her soul recoiled from such things with loathing. Were she to attempt them she knew she would fail ignominiously; in such stuff she could find no food for triumph. And it must be added, that she felt a wish that she should win the respect of that strange and critical Old Doughty, in whom she felt a sort of pitying interest. In the ante-room of the concert-room, just before going on, she would tell Braham Nagle what she had determined upon. She was a devoted and affectionate daughter; but on one or two occasions, when the family honour or dignity was concerned, had made a firm stand, which her father had been unable to resist. She was looking forward with exultation to that triumph. *He* should hear of it afar off, and should learn that she had not been left a mere helpless, crushed, and deserted thing. He should learn that—

As she paced up and down she hardly heard the maid of the lodgings, who had repeated twice that some one wished to see her.

It was a gentleman. It was Mr. Alfred Duke! There he was rushing in, eager and penitent!

Just published, the
**EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER FOR
CHRISTMAS, 1872,**

ENTITLED
DOOM'S DAY CAMP.

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THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 216. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE DOGS AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER XXXVII. A LAST LOOK.

At about eleven o'clock next morning, mamma came to my bedside, having thrown her dressing-gown on, and holding a note in her hand. I was wakened by her calling me by my name; and the extraordinary exertion of getting out of her bed at such an hour, the morning after a ball, even if there had not been consternation in her looks, would have satisfied me that something unusual had happened. I sat up staring at her.

"Oh, dear Ethel, here's a note from Doctor Droqville; I'm so shocked—poor, dear Aunt Lorrimer is dead." And mamma burst into tears, and, sobbing, told me to read the note, which, so soon as I had a little collected myself, I did. It said:

DEAR MRS. WARE,—I could not, of course, last night tell you the sad news about Lady Lorrimer. She arrived, it seems, on Tuesday last, to die in England. On leaving Lady Mardykes's last night, I went to her house to make inquiries; she was good enough to wish to see me. I found her in a most alarming state, and quite conscious of her danger. She was sinking rapidly. I was, therefore, by no means surprised, on calling about half an hour ago, to learn that she was no more. I lose no time in communicating the sad intelligence. It will be consolatory to you to learn that the nurses, who were present during her last moments, tell me that she died without any pain or struggle. I shall call to-morrow as near twelve as I can, to learn whether there is anything in which you

think my poor services can be made available.

I remain, dear Mrs. Ware,
Ever yours sincerely,
P. DROQVILLE.

I was very sorry. I even shed some tears, a thing oftener written about than done.

Mamma cried for a long time. She had now no near kinswoman left. When we are "pretty well on," and the thinned ranks of one generation only stand between us and death, the disappearance of the old over the verge is a serious matter. Between mamma and Lady Lorrimer, too, there were early recollections and sympathies in common, and the chasm was not so wide.

But for the young, and I was then young, the old seem at best a sort of benevolent ghosts, whose presence, more or less, chills and awes, and whose home is not properly with the younger generation. Their memories are busy with a phantom world that passed away before we were born. They are puckered masks and glassy eyes, peeping from behind the door of the sepulchre that stands ajar, closing little by little to shut them in for ever. I am now but little past forty, yet I feel this isolation stealing upon me. I acquiesce in the law of nature, though it seems a cynical one. I know I am no longer of the young; I grow shy of them; there is a real separation between us.

The world is for the young; it belongs to them, and time makes us ugly, and despised, and solitary, and prepares for our unregretted removal, for nature has ordained that death shall trouble the pleasure and economy of the vigorous, high-spirited world, as little as may be.

Mamma was more grieved, a great deal,

than I at all expected. I am writing now in solitude, and from my interior convictions, under a sort of obligation to tell, not only nothing but the truth, but the whole truth also; and I confess that mamma was selfish, and, in a degree, exacting. The education of her whole married life had tended to form those habits; but she was also affectionate, and her grief was vehement, and did not subside, as I thought it would, after its first outburst.

The only practical result of her grief was a determination to visit the house, and see the remains of the poor lady.

I never could understand the comfort that some people seem to derive from contemplating such a spectacle. To me the sight is simply shocking.

Mamma made it a point, however, that I should accompany her. She could not make up her mind to go that day. The next day Doctor Droqville called. Mamma saw him.

After they had talked for a little, mamma declared her intention of seeing poor Lady Lorrimer as she lay in her bed.

"Allow me to advise you, as a physician, to do no such thing," said Droqville. "You'll inflict a great deal of pain on yourself, and do nobody any good."

"But unless I see her once more I shall be miserable," pleaded mamma.

"You have not nerve for such scenes," he replied; "you'd not be yourself again for a month after."

I joined my entreaties to Doctor Droqville's representations, and I thought we had finally prevailed over mamma's facile will.

He gave us a brief account of Lady Lorrimer's illness and last moments, and then talked on other subjects; finally, he said: "You told me you wished me to return a bracelet that does not answer, to St. Aumand, when I pass again through Paris. I find I shall be there in a few days; can you let me have it now?"

Mamma's maid was out, so she went to get it herself, and, while she was away, Doctor Droqville said to me with rather a stern look: "Don't you allow her to go; your mamma has a form of the same affection of the heart. We can't tell her that; but quiet nerves are essential to her. She touches the spring of the mischief, and puts it in action at any moment, by agitating herself."

"I think she has given up that intention," I answered; "but for Heaven's sake, Doctor Droqville, tell me, is mamma in any danger?"

"No, if she will only keep quiet. She may live for many years to come; but every woman, of course, who has a delicacy of the kind, may kill herself easily and quickly; but—I hear her—don't allow her to go."

Mamma returned, and Doctor Droqville soon took his departure, leaving me very miserable, and very much alarmed.

She now talked only of postponing her last look at poor Lady Lorrimer until to-morrow. Her vacillations were truly those of weakness, but they were sometimes violent; and when her emotions overcame her indolence, she was not easily managed.

The dark countenance of Doctor Droqville, as he urged his prohibition, excited vague suspicions. It was by no means benevolent; it was grim, and even angry. It struck me instinctively that he might have some motive, other than the kind one which he professed, in wishing to scare away mamma from the house of death.

Doctor Droqville was, I believe, a very clever physician; but his visits to England being desultory, he could not, of course, take the position of any but an occasional adviser. He had acquired an influence over mamma, and I think if he had been a resident in London she would have consulted no other.

As matters were, however, Sir Jacob Lake was her "physician in ordinary." To him I wrote the moment I had an opportunity, stating what had occurred, enclosing his fee, and begging of him to look in at about two next day, on any pretext he could think of, to determine the question.

Next day came, and with two o'clock, just as we were sitting down to lunch, Sir Jacob arrived.

I ran up instantly to the drawing-room, leaving mamma to follow, for sages of his kind have not many minutes to throw away. He relieved my mind a little about mamma, but not quite, and before he had spoken half a dozen sentences she came in.

He made an excuse of poor Lady Lorrimer's death, and had brought with him two or three letters of hers describing her case, which he thought might be valuable should any discussion arise respecting the nature of her disease.

The conversation thus directed, I was enabled to put the question on which Doctor Droqville had been so peremptory. Sir Jacob said there was nothing to prevent mamma's going, and that she was a great deal more likely to be agitated by a

dogged opposition to a thing she had so set her heart on.

Now that mamma found herself quite at liberty to go, I think she grew a little frightened. She was looking ill. She had eaten nearly nothing for the last two days, seen nobody but Doctor Droqville and the doctor who had just now called, and her head was full of her mourning and mine. Her grief was very real. Through Lady Lorrimer's eyes she had been accustomed to look back into her own early life. They had both seen the same scenes and people that she remembered, and now there was no one left with whom she could talk over old times.

Mamma was irresolute till late in the afternoon, and then at last she made up her mind.

We drove through half a dozen streets. I did not know in what street my poor Aunt Lorrimer's house was. We suddenly pulled up, and the footman came to the door to say that there was a chain across the street at each end. We had nothing for it but to get out and to walk past the paviers who had taken possession of it. The sun was, I suppose, at this time about setting. The sunlight fell faintly on the red brick chimneys above, but all beneath was dark and cold. In its present state it was a melancholy and silent street.

It was, I instantly saw, the very same street in which Lady Lorrimer had chosen to pass me by.

"Is that the house, the one with the tan before it?" I asked.

It was.

I was now clear upon the point. Into that house I had seen her go; the woman in the odd costume who had walked beside her, Mr. Carmel's thin figure and melancholy ascetic face, and the silence in which they moved, were all remembered and recalled the sense of curious mystery with which I had observed the parting, more than two years ago, and mingled an unpleasant ingredient in the gloom that deepened about me as I now approached the door.

It was all to be cleared up soon. The door was instantly opened by a man in black, placed in the hall. A man also in black, thin, very perpendicular, with a long neck, sallow face, and black eyes, very stern, passed us by in silence with a glance. He turned about before he reached the hall door, and in a low tone, a little grimly, inquired our business.

I told him, and also who we were.

We were standing at the foot of the stairs. On hearing our names he took off

his hat, and, more courteously, requested us to wait for a moment where we were, till he should procure a person to conduct us to the room. This man was dressed something in the style of our own High Church divines, except that his black coat was longer I think. He had hardly left us when there was a ring at the bell, and a poor woman, with a little girl by the hand, came in, whispered to the man in the hall, and then, passing us by, went up the stairs in silence, and disappeared. They were met by a second clergyman coming down, rather corpulent, with a tallowy countenance and spectacles, who looked at us suspiciously, and went out just as a party of three came into the hall, and passed us by like the former.

Almost immediately the clergyman we had first met returned, and conducted us up the stairs as far as the first landing, where we were met by a lady in a strange brown habit, with a rosary, and a hood over her head, whom I instantly knew to be a nun. We followed her up the stairs. There was a strange air of mystery and of publicity in the proceedings; the house seemed pretty well open to all comers; no one who whispered a few words satisfactorily to the porter in the hall failed to obtain immediate access to the upper floor of the house. Everything was carried on in whispers, and a perpetual tramping of feet was slowly going up and down stairs.

It was much more silent as we reached the level of the drawing-rooms. The nun opened the back drawing-room, and without more ceremony than a quiet movement of her hand, signed to us to go in. I think mamma's heart half failed her; I almost hoped she would change her mind, for she hesitated, and sighed two or three times heavily, with her hand pressed to her heart, and looked very faint.

The light that escaped through the half-opened door was not that of day, but the light of candles. Mamma took my arm, and in silence hurried me into the room.

Now I will tell you what I saw. The room was hung with black, which probably improved the effect of its size, for it appeared very large. The windows were obliterated by the hangings of black cloth, which were continued without interruption round all the walls of the room. A great many large wax candles were burning in it, and the black background, reflecting no light, gave to all the objects standing in the room an odd sharpness and relief.

At the far end of the apartment stood a sort of platform about as wide as a narrow

bed, covered with a deep velvet cushion, with a drapery of the same material descending to the floor. On this lay the body of Lady Lorrimer, habited in the robes and hood of the order, I think, of the Carmelites; her hands were placed together on her breast, and her rosary was twined through her fingers. The hood was drawn quite up about the head and cheeks of the corpse.

Her dress, the cushion on which she lay, the pillow creased by the pressure of her cold head, were strewn with flowers.

I had resolved not to look at it; such sights haunt me afterwards; but an irresistible curiosity overcame me. It was just one momentary glance, but the picture has remained on my inner sight ever since, as if I had gazed for an hour.

There was at the foot of this catafalque an altar, on which was placed a large crucifix; huge candlesticks with tall tapers stood on the floor beside it; many of the strangers who came in kneeled before the crucifix and prayed, no doubt for the departed spirit. Many smaller crucifixes were hung upon the walls, and before these also others of the visitors from time to time said a prayer. Two nuns stood one at each side of the body, like effigies of contemplation and prayer, telling their beads. It seemed to me that there was a profusion of wax lights. The transition from the grey evening light, darker in the house, into this illumination of tapers, had a strange influence upon my imagination. The reality of the devotion, and the more awful reality of death, quite overpowered the theatrical character of the effect.

I saw the folly of mamma's irrepressible desire to come here. I thought she was going to faint; I dare say she would have done so, she looked so very ill, but that tears relieved her. They were tears in which grief had but a subordinate share; they were nervous tears, the thunder-shower of the hysteria which had been brewing ever since she had entered the room.

I don't know whether she was sorry that she had come. I am sure she would have been better if she had never wished it.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

(THE LAST OF THE SECOND SERIES.)

WAS SHE MURDERED?

No special portents attended the coming on of night in the town of Darmstadt on the 13th of June, 1847. On the sandy plain beyond the walls and fosse; on the narrow well-like lanes of the old town; on the broad Rheinstrasse and Neckar-

strasse, the stately, intersecting roads of the new town; on the great ducal statue, aloft on its Doric column in the Louisenplatz; on the grand duke's palace; on the gardens of the old chateau; on the museum, library, and picture galleries; on the Corinthian pillars of the theatre and the Estate's House; on the Protestant and Catholic churches; on the huge drill-house; on the town-hall and barracks; on the carpet and card manufactories; on the venerated houses where Schleirmacher and Liebig were born—the warm darkness settled down slowly, deadening the rich colours of sunset, and gradually hushing into silence the chatter, wrangle, and prattle of men, women, and children. The hopes and joys of another day had passed, and night, like an imperturbable sexton, was slowly filling up their graves with darkness.

Some hours before, indeed, between three and four P.M., in the bright sunlight, the Count of Goerlitz had gaily sallied out to dinner, leaving at home his wife, the countess, a lady of about forty-six, of active, industrious, but somewhat reserved and parsimonious habits. As soon as her husband left, the countess had retired to her own suite of apartments to pore over her accounts, and arrange various domestic matters. She had given her servants a holiday till late in the evening, and only one man, Stauff, who seemed indifferent to theatre, wine-shop, or promenade, was left at home to guard the great, silent house.

The countess's private apartments were on the frugal German scale, and consisted of a suite of three rooms. The first was an ante-chamber; the second a parlour, containing in one corner a Russian stove, in the other a writing-desk; and beyond this was a small cabinet only large enough to receive a divan, on which the countess usually took her siesta towards sunset. At about seven o'clock, the count returned from dinner and his game of billiards, and knocked at the door of the ante-room; but receiving no answer, he went out again like a good, easy-tempered man, took another cigar, and probably once more watched the careering of the white and red balls over the green cloth. At about ten P.M. he quietly returned, and once more knocked, still without the faintest sense of alarm. He knocked, but no one answered; he listened—there was a deadly silence. He knocked again, there was no reply. Then he felt a sudden, hot damp break out on his forehead, as he struggled with the door, and cried angrily

for it to be opened. Still there was no reply. Had it been the door of the old mouldy family vault, the silence could not have been more relentless. Hearing the alarm, the servants, just then returned, laughing and chaffing, ran up, and were instantly sent by the pale count for workmen with crowbars and chisels to break open the locked door, the keys of which were never afterwards found. The doors were soon forced by rough, expert hands, and the count and his frightened servants crowded in. The rooms were filled with a stifling, thick smoke, so dense, that it was impossible even to face it till one of the windows was forced out. The moment the air entered, the smoke broke into a crimson flame; the parlour hangings turned to fire, the writing-desk was on fire, as well as the inlaid wooden floor beneath it. The countess lay dead, about a foot from the writing-desk, her head towards the window, her feet stretched towards the middle of the room. There was no appearance of fire near the body, nor on the floor where it rested, nor was the fire violent, for a few eimer of water (fifteen or sixteen imperial gallons) extinguished it. As this was being done, a rush of smoke came from the open door of the inner cabinet, where the ottoman was found to be on fire. Nothing else, however, in the room was on fire, and in front of the ottoman lay one of the countess's slippers quite uninjured, the other was still on her foot. It was now remembered that a bright light had been seen at the countess's closet window about eight P.M.

We leave the blackness and horror of that summer night, and return to the rooms in the clear, truth-telling sunlight of the next bright, unconscious day, when Doctor Graff, a physician of Darmstadt, being officially called in, inspected the corpse and the chamber with clear, keen, searching eyes. He found the whole apartment smelling of smoke, and in such disorder as might have been expected after a fire. The writing-desk had been mostly consumed, and the papers it had contained, partly burned, lay scattered about the room. A mirror on the parlour wall, fifteen feet five inches from the writing-desk, was cracked, and two stearine candles, which had stood on a chiffonier, nine feet three inches from it, were melted. The ottoman in the closet was displaced, and nearly in its centre was an almost oval hole, caused by the combustion of the hair mattress and stuffing.

Graff observed, to his surprise, that the dress on the upper part of the corpse was almost wholly consumed. The body lay on its left side, the head and chest retracted, the neck everywhere blackened and charred, as were the skin and muscles of the upper parts of the chest. The joints of both upper arms had their surfaces charred, except at the hands. Considering, firstly, that the deceased had been in full bodily vigour; secondly, that she had been seen by her servants the evening before in good health; thirdly, that she had not gone to bed, but must have been occupied at her writing-desk; fourthly, that in case of the fire having been accidental, she might have escaped from it, or at least have called for assistance, of which efforts there was no indication, though she was close to a window; and, fifthly, that as the traces of the fire and the carbonisation of the body were chiefly about the head, and that the open mouth and protruded tongue were indicative of suffocation, Doctor Graff reported, with a certain professional exultation, that it was highly probable that this had been one of the rare instances of what is termed spontaneous combustion, a supposition which, in his opinion, alone could explain the circumstances that the deceased had been unable to call for assistance, or to save herself, as she might have done, had the light on the writing-desk caught her hair or head-dress. This opinion Doctor Graff partially qualified next day, by further reporting that his conclusion in regard to the high probability of death by spontaneous combustion, in this instance, was an hypothesis only admissible in the absence of indications of violence on the countess's body, the abstract possibility of which he was not prepared to deny.

Doctor Stegmayer, the family doctor, proffered evidence as to the state of the countess's health before the fire. He had never seen anything to indicate the countess having a fondness for spirituous liquids. There was nothing in the appearance of the body that led him to believe that it had been exposed to the action of fire during life.

A Doctor Von Siebold, on the other hand, was ardent in favour of the spontaneous combustion theory. Eager to establish his case, he drew up a most learned and elaborate report. In proof of the occasional occurrence of death in this way, he pointed to the instances adduced by Kopp, Friederich, Henke, and Devergie. He also enumerated

by Devergie in the article on spontaneous human combustion in the *Dict. de Med. et de Chir. Pract.*

On the 26th of November, 1847, it was intimated by the count that an inquest would be held respecting the fate of the deceased. The next day, however, the count's cook detected a quantity of greenish matter (*verdigris*) in a sauce intended for the count. About the same time suspicion was awakened against Stauff, the servant who had been left in charge of the house, from the discovery of some jewels, which had belonged to the countess, in the possession of one of his relations at a distance. Moreover, a few days after the fire several boxes full of charred matches had been found below a small Russian stove in Stauff's room. The bell-pull in the countess's room, it was now remembered, was torn away the night of the fire, and lay on the floor near the spot where it had been attached.

At the inquest the doctors again mustered ready to fight tooth and nail for the phenomenal theory. It was shown that the mirror and an oil-painting above a sofa in the parlour were obscured by a coating of a soft, deep reddish matter, containing black points visible in it, with or without the aid of a lens. The feet of a chair placed near the writing-desk were slightly charred. From the facts of the case Doctor Von Siebold considered that the burning of the countess's body could not have been the consequence of accident. The combustion of the desk and the portion of the floor could not have done it. The corpse was found out of the reach of these, and on a part of the floor to which the fire had not extended. After explaining away the facts which favoured the supposition of design, the self-satisfied doctor contended that no murderer could have chosen a mode of concealing his crime of so difficult and complicated a kind, which demanded time for its execution, endangered his discovery while putting it in force, required the collection of abundant materials, was likely to leave its traces behind it, and which, in short, none but a madman in the pursuit of some fixed purpose was capable of carrying successfully into effect. He contended in addition that spontaneous combustion alone could satisfactorily explain the circumstances of the case. Supposing that the combustion had begun at the head, the countess might at the moment have been in a state to run to the bell-pull, and, in her agony, to pull it till it gave

way. The flame seen from a house opposite the window of the little room at eight o'clock showed that she had been lying on the ottoman when her head had taken fire, which accounted for the hole burned in the cushion, as well as the finding of her slipper in this apartment. He conjectured that the countess was in the act of running to the window to call for assistance, when she had fallen before the writing-desk and set it on fire.

A Doctor Morell, a great analyst, next came forward and described all the torturing and questioning processes to which he had submitted the brownish coating from the mirror. Sufficient for unenlightened minds to know that he had found it contained ammonia and acetic acid; it must therefore have been derived from the combustion of both vegetable and animal matter.

The whole profession blazed up at this, and the spontaneous combustionists grew as warm as the murder theorists grew hot. The following questions were then solemnly put by the government to the whole Medical College of the Grand Duchy of Hesse:

First. Whether, and in how far, it could with certainty be determined either that the death of the countess had been the result of spontaneous combustion, or that this mode of death was in any case admissible? And in case of a negative answer to both these questions:

Second. Whether, and in how far, grounds of probability existed in this case for or against the likelihood of this mode of death?

Third. Whether, and in how far, the employment of the sauce drugged with *verdigris*, or a portion of it, would have endangered the life or health of the person partaking of it?

It was further intimated to the doctors that, should the disinterment of the body be by them deemed necessary or desirable, in order to the elucidation of the first and second questions, power should be obtained for that purpose. In reply, the Medical College referred to a report by Doctor Graff, to which they gave their formal assent, being unanimous against the spontaneous combustion theory. The learned doctor selected forty cases, from which he filtered the following more or less satisfactory deductions:

In the cases referred to, the proportion of females to males was as four to one; the parties were of very advanced age, chiefly from fifty to eighty years, of habits for the most part sedentary and inactive; they

were in almost every instance stout and very fat, and almost all had been for years addicted to the excessive use of spirituous liquors. The combustion almost always immediately followed such excesses; it always happened in night time and in winter; calls for assistance were never heard from the parties; in the majority of the cases, though not in all, there was some burning body in the vicinity. The combustion was always excessively rapid, occupying mostly but a few minutes, sometimes only a few seconds, attended with flame, and barely admitted being extinguished by water; and even very inflammable objects in the vicinity of the victim often escaped injury. In every instance the combustion involved part of the trunk of the body, and with few exceptions this part was always converted into charcoal and ashes. In the majority of the cases portions of the head and limbs escaped the action of the fire; the extremities were severed at the joints, and were covered with vesications; the combustion had always a fatal termination, and the charcoal which was left mostly retained the form of the part burned, was very porous, and fell into powder on the slightest touch. The ashes were almost constantly intermingled with a yellowish, oily, glutinous liquid, which also covered the floor, and gave out a penetrating empyreumatic odour; and finally, the whole chamber was filled with a thick smoke, and the walls and furniture were covered with a dark soot.

The report then went on to pronounce decidedly that the countess had been first strangled by an assassin, and then placed near some burning furniture.

By Doctor Graff's advice, the countess's body was disinterred on the 11th of August, 1848, and, as was suspected, the right side of the skull was found to be fractured. The limbs were found to be very partially injured by fire, and the bones when struck gave out the usual sound. At the requisition of the President of the Assizes, Professor Lichy and Doctor Bischoff, of Giessen, were conjoined with the members of the Hessian Medical College, and the following questions were referred to a body of experts:

First. In the foregoing circumstances is it possible, probable, or certain, that the death of the Countess of Goerlitz, and the state in which her body was found on the 13th of June, 1847, had been the consequences of the so-termed spontaneous combustion?

Second. In the foregoing circumstances is it possible, probable, or certain, that the deceased had perished from a fire external to her, and that she was exposed to such an influence, either, first, through an unfortunate accident; secondly, intentionally from her own or another's deed?

Third. In the foregoing circumstances is it possible, probable, or certain, that the deceased had not been exposed to the action of fire till after her death, and in this case is it to be admitted that she had perished, firstly, by suicide, or secondly, by the hand of another, perhaps, by the fracturing of her skull or suffocation, or, thirdly, from an attack of disease, or the occurrence of some unlucky accident?

Fourth. In the foregoing circumstances is it possible, probable, or certain, that the obvious source of the fire, the burning writing-desk, was the sole cause of the burning of the body of the deceased, or was any further cause necessary for the production of this burning?

The Commission of Experts returned in answer that they believed that the countess had not died of spontaneous combustion, a phenomenon of which indeed all the learned gentlemen — Doctor Graff alone excepted — denied totally the existence. Second. They considered that the countess had not perished by fire at all. Third. She was not accidentally burned, nor in such a way as to have prevented her calling for assistance. Fourth. They considered she had been burned after death. Fifth. The countess might have taken prussic acid, morphia, or strychnine, first setting fire to the ottoman, the sofa, and the writing-desk, but this was unlikely, as there were no known motives for suicide. Sixth. They admitted the possibility of the countess having had a fit, and while in a fit having been suffocated by a fire accidentally caused. Finally, the experts agreed that the deceased had perished by the hand of another, who had first stunned and then strangled her. As to whether the combustion of the desk alone was sufficient to have produced the burns on the countess's body, the experts were terribly opposed. The obstinate Doctor Graff, with Doctors Leidhecker and Reiger, did not think the desk alone could have caused such burns. The majority were satisfied that the burning desk was sufficient.

To decide this last fact, Doctor Merck made some ghastly experiments in an outhouse of the hospital at Giessen. He took a woman's body, dressed like the countess, and

placed it near a burning desk in the position in which the body of the countess was found. They found the body in the experiment was burned much as that of the countess had been burned. The experts also declared that it was impossible that the murderer of the countess could have remained in the room during the combustion of the body, nor have returned to it after leaving, owing to the unbearable smoke and heat. He would, beside, have been eager to change his dress, and to wash, to get rid of the betraying smell.

This learned puzzlement, which might never have been cleared up, was ended by Stauff's own confession. At the diet of the assizes of the 11th of April, 1850, John Stauff was found guilty of the murder of the Countess of Goerlitz, and of the subsequent fire-raising, and attempt to poison, and was sentenced to imprisonment for life. In the autumn of the same year he confessed that he had entered the countess's room to announce to her that he was going out, when, finding no one in the room, he was tempted by the articles of value he saw there to commit a robbery. While doing so the countess came in. A struggle then took place, and he strangled her. He afterwards placed the body in a chair, heaped combustible articles round it, and set fire to them.

THE RUSSIANS IN CENTRAL ASIA.

At the present moment, when the question of Central Asia is once more beginning to attract general attention, and when the Khiva Expedition, notwithstanding the skilfully disseminated rumour of its recal, is in reality much nearer to its goal than the quidnuncs of Western Europe imagine, a few words respecting the position of Russia in the Far East may not be out of place. Thanks to the mystery with which she has hitherto enveloped her movements, the actual advantages gained by her in Central Asia have been underrated by one party as much as they have been exaggerated by another; but there can be no doubt that, on the whole, the balance is decidedly in her favour. Turkestan, though at present a source of loss rather than of profit,* is precisely one of those political investments which pay magnificently after a time. The Khiva Expedition once successful—the

* The estimates, which show a surplus, are taken without the cost of the army of occupation—in itself a source of fabulous expense. Every year has hitherto shown a large deficit.

flank of Asiatic Russia secured against the marauders which have so long infested it—the Czar's new acquisition will have free space to develop itself; and "its development" (as a great Russian statesman once assured me) "will astonish all Europe." With a railway from the Black Sea to the Caspian, and Tashkent, viâ Khodjent and Samarcand, to Teheran—with a line of steamers on the Syr-Daria and Amu-Daria—with a great manufacturing centre established at Khodjent, and the new commercial treaty with Kashgar* pouring innumerable caravans through the passes of the Thian-Shan Mountains, it is difficult to set bounds to the possible growth of Russian commerce in the East. In the far future, Muscovite statesmen behold the vision of a golden age, when the capitalists of Western Europe shall scramble for shares in the Grand Central Tashkent and Teheran Railway, and all nations send their representatives to the Great International Exhibition of Samarcand.

It may be worth while, as the best way of conveying an idea of Russia's present position in Turkestan, to give a brief sketch of her political centre of action there. The broad belt of level country lying between Tashkent and Samarcand, which, instead of being (as hitherto imagined) a vast wilderness haunted by untamable marauders, is in reality a fertile and well-watered region, with marked advantages of climate and position, containing several populous cities, and swarming with craftsmen of no contemptible skill. Even for mere picturesqueness, I have seen few routes either in Asia or in South America which can bear comparison with the one in question; and to any adventurous tourist in quest of new worlds to conquer, I would confidently recommend the "line" of the Syr-Daria with its wonderful panorama of bold ridges of naked rock; colossal mounds, reared centuries ago; dainty little towns, peeping like shy children from the arms of encircling forests; boundless wastes of level prairie; vast glaciers and shadowy mountain peaks, hanging like clouds on the distant sky; shady dells, murmuring with sparkling rivulets; grim gorges, such as the White Demon of Persian legend would have loved to haunt; and lonely lakes whose grey, unending desolation weighs upon the eye like a nightmare. Nor are the people less picturesque than their country. As you ad-

* Concluded by General Kaufmann on the 20th of June, 1872.

vance there grows up around you a motley group of strange figures, such as Western Europe has never beheld—the human form in all its varied developments from the best to the worst, from the kingly bearing of the mountain chief to the hideous squalor of the city pariah. There stand the bullet-headed Tartar, and the mean-looking Sart, and the shaggy-haired, gipsy-like Dhouwana. There towers the tall, wiry Turkoman, with a latent vigour betraying itself in every line of his long, gaunt limbs. There, too, grins the gnome-like Bashkir, hirsute and untamable as the four-footed ancestor assigned him by tradition; and the savage Kirghiz, with his hooked nose, coarse-matted hair, and glittering, rat-like eyes. There appears the lean, leathery visage of the Kashgarin, with his huge bat-like ears projecting from under the little saucer-shaped cap which crowns his narrow forehead. And there, conspicuous above all, shines the sleek, tiger-like beauty of the Afghan, with his fierce black eyes gleaming from beneath the shadow of his green turban, and the shining hilt of his yataghan standing out against the whiteness of his long hanging robe.

The first stage of the route from Tashkent is more remarkable for picturesqueness than for comfort. The country is thickly dotted with villages, and rich with cultivation as far as the eye can reach; but the muddiness of the soil is enough to stagger even a Russian. I have seen my wheels sink axle-deep in mire at every turn on the great plain of Kazan; and I have myself sunk much deeper than I liked in the belt of black loam which fringes the Nile and Jordan; but I still doubt whether the basin of the Syr-Daria may not bear comparison with either. On such a soil the stories of the Cheshire farmer who lost his road "because he couldn't see which way his feet were turned," or of the Irish courier, with his chin just level with the bog, assuring the amazed bystanders that "he had a good horse under him that would bring him out if anything could," appear quite natural and moderate. Add to this the necessity of crossing a difficult stream every half-hour or so, under a temperature nearly equal to that of Nubia or the Hedjaz, and it will readily be perceived that travelling in Turkestan is not all *couleur de rose*. It must be owned, however, that—just as the camel is made for the desert—the *aroba*, or native cart, which would be an insult to nature in any

more civilised region, is wonderfully adapted to the requirements of its own. Its great breadth of beam and enormous wheels (each upwards of six feet in diameter) give it an amazing power of balance—no mean advantage in such a labyrinth of holes, ruts, ridges, and mountain torrents; while the way in which it scrambles, almost without a halt, through the ocean of thick black mud that covers the level ground, is astounding to a foreigner. The driver usually mounts the wheeler (keeping his feet pressed against the shaft to prevent the horse from rearing), and stimulates his team with a constant succession of fearful howls, beside which an Indian war-whoop would be "nowhere."

After crossing the range of Kouran-Tau, a stony and desolate tract replaces the rich loam of the northern plain, taking from beauty what it gives to comfort; and the vast untrodden steppe, flanked by an endless rampart of stern, grey rock, haunts you almost to the gates of Khodjent. This charming little town (which a Persian poet would liken to a child cradled in roses), overlooking from its waving woods the swift, dark stream of the Syr-Daria, and watching, with the glittering towers of seven mosques, over the many-coloured brightness of its thousand gardens, is indeed "beautiful exceedingly;" but its beauty, is, at present, literally all that it possesses. Placed as it is on one of the largest rivers of Central Asia, and at the intersection of the four great roads leading to Kokan, Balkh, Tashkent, and Samarcand, it has, nevertheless, no traffic worthy of mention. The silk factories established by the Russian colonists, though full of promise for the future, are still in their infancy, from the immense difficulty of obtaining skilled workmen; and the boundless mineral wealth stored in the hills which overlook the town, still lies untouched and useless. Moreover, the suddenness of the Russian occupation has given the two races no time to coalesce; and the foreigners still inhabit a separate quarter of the town, like the Jews of the Middle Ages.

The second part of the journey, from Khodjent to Samarcand, is fully as picturesque as the first, but even more fatiguing, thanks to those breakneck bridle-paths which have been the high roads of Tartary, as of the Holy Land, since the days of Abraham. The abundance of rich vegetation everywhere visible, gives this district a flourishing appearance; but in reality it

is very unproductive, the excessive irrigation combining with the Asiatic's innate love of gardens to prevent the raising of corn to any great extent. Moreover, the native implements of agriculture are entirely of wood, and of the rudest possible description;* and the prevalent system of cultivation is on a par with its tools.

The diet of the common people consists chiefly of fruit and wheaten cakes, meat being a luxury attainable only by the richer classes. Their drinks are green tea, milk, and a kind of beer made from the grain of millet. The climate is healthy upon the whole, the prevalent diseases being mainly attributable to the filthy habits of the people. Indeed, it must be owned that throughout the whole of Turkestan (as in India and many other tropical countries), the villages are an absolute blot upon the landscape. The streets are incredibly filthy, and the houses themselves mere dumplings of sun-dried clay, with a single aperture for door, window, and chimney. In fact, no feature of the country strikes a foreigner more forcibly than the startling contrast between the grandeur of its public buildings, and the meanness of its ordinary dwellings—a contrast typical of Asiatic history, where some mighty figure rises ever and anon above a herd of nameless savages. And, certainly, there exists as wide a difference between a Baber or a Tamerlane, and the coarse barbarians whom they ruled, as between the stately mosques, with their tall minarets and shadowy recesses, and the noisome burrows in which man and beast huddle together amid stench, and smoke, and darkness.

One of the favourite native amusements is the game of "Kok-Bari," as infallible an adjunct of a Turkoman merry-making as blind-man's buff once was of an English Christmas. The host starts the fun by placing the carcass of a lamb or kid, roasted whole, in the hands of one of his guests, who at once gallops off with it. The rest follow, and attempt to snatch it from him, but should he succeed in baffling them for a certain distance (no light feat amongst such horsemen as the Turkomans), it is awarded to him as the prize of the sport. A similar pastime, it may be remarked, is practised by the Mexicans, among whom, however, the kid is replaced by a live cock.

About thirteen miles from Samarcand the road crosses the ridge of Tchepan-Atin,

on which the Bokhariotes made their last stand, in 1866, in defence of the town, and where General Kaufmann's army achieved its crowning exploit. At the time of the battle a sudden rise of the river Zariavshen had inundated the whole plain, and the defenders, commanding every approach with their artillery, considered their position impregnable. General Kaufmann, however, ordered an attack on the right flank, where the ridge was less precipitous, and the officer who led the assault addressed his men as follows: "Children, our father the general has ordered us to storm that position, and therefore it must be possible. Forward!" Like one man, the brave soldiers threw themselves into the foaming current (already breast high), under a heavy fire, dashed through it, and were beginning to struggle up the heights beyond, when, just at the moment that a vigorous countercharge might have ruined the whole attack, the enemy, seized with one of those strange panics to which Asiatic soldiery are always liable, abandoned their guns, and fled in confusion, leaving the victory to a handful of men, barely one-third of their number.

Samarcand is a town of thirty thousand inhabitants, surrounded by a massive rampart with six fine gateways. Its trade is very considerable, European goods of every kind being largely imported, and skins, knives, carpets, silks, embroidered saddles, &c., exported in vast quantities. The citadel, which is defended by a strong wall thirty-six feet high, and nearly two miles in circumference, is one of the finest in Central Asia; but the city itself, in spite of its grand historical associations, is simply an Oriental town of the lowest type. Around the monuments of Tamerlane lies a chaos of narrow rubbish-blocked streets, low, miserable-looking hovels, filth, and disease, and misery in every form—an Asiatic city of the worst kind, applied to which the great name of Samarcand sounds like a hideous mockery. Nor has the boasted "Russian civilisation," which is to "leaven Asiatic barbarism," shown to much advantage upon its new field of action. The frightful details given by Russian colonists respecting the behaviour of their countrymen—their constant dissensions, their utter want of honesty and even of decency, their harshness toward the native population, the hideous vices to which they have abandoned themselves—cannot be quoted in these pages, but they are amply sufficient to show that hitherto, at least, the "new

* Those of Russia itself, however, are little, if at all better.

dominion" is anything but a change for the better.

Samarcand has come to be considered, during the last few years, as the limit of Russia's progress in Central Asia, a halting place, so to speak, of her own selection. A greater mistake could hardly have been made. Russia cannot halt now if she would—she has gone too far to hesitate. General Romanovski, when I met him at Baden-Baden the year after his Bokharian campaign, was never weary of descanting upon the moderation of the Imperial counsels, and the firm resolve of Russia to advance no further; but he spoke like a man burdened with the secret consciousness that such a position must ere long become untenable. How utterly untenable it is, the events of the last five years have shown with portentous clearness. Russia is now standing with one foot upon the Oxus, and the other upon the Jaxartes; her way into China opened by the conquest of Kouldja; her communications about to be secured by that of Khiva. The bugbear of her threatened invasion of India, indeed, has been long since exploded; but the peril of her hemming in Asiatic Turkey, converting Persia into her obedient vassal, and interrupting our communications with the East, is real and present enough. With Russian geographers busy along the southern frontier of Bokhara; with a third of the Black Sea and Caspian Railway already completed, and another line about to be constructed from Orenburg to the Volga; with every journal in St. Petersburg interpreting Lord Northbrook's reply to the Khan of Khiva, and the recent utterances of the Times, as a free permission to Russia to do what she will; in the face of all this, it is time for England to bestir herself in earnest. A year ago, we were confidently relying upon "the anti-Russian feeling of the able and enterprising Sultan of Kashgar," and now this very man has concluded a commercial treaty with Russia, and is permitting the savants of St. Petersburg to visit his capital and explore his territories. Whether Russia's real aim be to advance upon Kashgar, to penetrate into Afghanistan, or (as I suspect) to annex the western provinces of China, her facilities for attaining it are such as cannot safely be despised. To define, beyond the possibility of misunderstanding, our Indian frontier, to strengthen the hands of the Kara-Turkomans and Kurdo-Armenians, to be explicit in prohibiting any movement on the part of Russia against Yarkand or

Kashgar—such is our manifest duty at the present conjuncture; and if we neglect it, it may well be that the danger of which Mr. Gifford Palgrave warned us four years ago, will come suddenly, and not find us watching.

VIOLET.

SPRING.

SWIFT-FALLING feet beneath the budding beech
Crush out the odours from a hundred urns,
Grass-hidden founts of fragrance. Needs there speech
To interpret all the rosy fire that burns
In that young cheek? "Nay, fly not, little fawn!
What have I done to fright or fret thee? Say!"
"Ah, Sir! but you have crushed my violets." Dawn
So fair gives promise of a wondrous day.
"Thy pardon, pretty one! henceforth I prize
The wee blue flower, for thinking of thine eyes."

SUMMER.

"Violet! Violet! may that star be blest
That drew me hither that bright April morn.
Sweet wood-flower, nestle nearer. Is there rest
Like strong love's arms, my darling?" Lightly borne
Upon the breath of June, the fragrance sweet
Of lush crush-clustered roses thrills the sense.
But ah! those violet eyes that shyly meet
His own! Her flower brings rapture more intense.
"Sweetheart! I would the year were alway spring
And all our life a woodland wandering."

AUTUMN.

The dew that gems the fragrant lidded flower,
That peereth, purple-orbed, through shadowy green,
Brings brightness; but the drops of sorrow's shower
Have dimmed those violet eyes. The chilly sheen
Of autumn glanceth through the yellowing leaves;
His foot is far, the flower he crushed may fade.
Oh wasted sweetness! Silently she grieves.
Oh squandered love! Yet will she not upbraid;
But doth regard with meek eyes, weary-wet,
The ashes of a withered violet.

WINTER.

A broken man, bowed low upon the breast
His manhood should have shielded! Now she tends
His weakness, in her arms the only rest
His stricken soul may seek. A snow-touch blends
With her brown tresses, but the violet eyes
Are spring-sweet yet. Without is winter grey,
But in her heart the wealth of summer skies
And summer flowers is garnered up for aye:
Spring's blossomings are fair, but, ah, how dear
The rare sweet violet of the later year!

SPRINGING A MINE.

It was curious and pleasant, so certain of Mr. Merdock's clients held, to discern through his office windows—heavily barred to defeat the designs of the burglarious—a small patch of enclosed land, rich in rank grass, and shaded, little as it needed shade, for the neighbouring houses hemmed it in on all sides, by an old stunted murky elm-tree. The land had originally pertained to a church that had long since vanished. Sometimes, after a ghostly-looking, solitary sheep, coming none knew from whence, or by whose authority, had been turned into the

enclosure, and had cropped and munched away the long grass, faint outlines of recumbent tombstones could be traced whitening here and there the vegetation. Within living memory no interment had taken place there; and the inhabitants of the adjoining buildings took little heed of it now, except now and then to turn it to account as a dustbin, a receptacle for broken glass and crockery, cinders, litter, refuse, and rubbish of all kinds.

Mr. Merdock's offices were on the ground-floor of a rambling old house in one of the tortuous confined thoroughfares of Walbrook. His private room was at the back of the building, and thus obtained its feeble sort of rural outlook. He was a solicitor of sound repute, enjoying an excellent practice; a tall, lean, elderly man, with good features, worn very sharp by time and hard work at his calling. His tall bald forehead had the look of old parchment, or of discoloured ivory; his sallow face was deeply lined and very gaunt. Yet his aspect betrayed no trace of ill health or of premature decay. He was alert of movement; the fringe of hair at the back of his bald head was still a dense black; there were no threads of silver in the sharply-trimmed, crescent-shaped whiskers he wore on his high cheek-bones; although his lips were colourless, his teeth were sound and white, and his grey eyes twinkled piercingly beneath his heavy pent-house brows. He was, plainly, a wiry, spare man, who could still endure much wear and tear, and make a good fight with time.

Mr. Merdock sat at his desk—idly for the moment—glancing now at the green enclosure to be seen from his window, now at a tin box, one of a large pile of similar tin boxes, ranged against the wall opposite to him, now at the Times newspaper, spread out before him. With a meditative air he was rubbing the palm of his large yellow bony hand against his very blue chin, for his strong black beard opposed a stout resistance to the razor, let him ply it as persistently as he might. He paused to take noisily a huge pinch of snuff, and then passed a large scarlet and puce silk pocket-handkerchief across his face.

"Poor Delpratt!" he said, with a glance at the tin box. The legend THE DELPRATT TRUST was inscribed upon it in dim gold letters. "Dead!" He gazed from the window at the waving grass and the murky elm of the graveyard without. "Four days ago!" He laid his hand upon the newspaper. It contained among its ad-

vertisements of deaths the following brief notification:

"On the 20th of November, at the Manor House, Lupton, Hants, EUSTACE VERE DELPRATT, aged fifty-seven."

Mr. Merdock shook his head mournfully, sighed, and then shrugged his shoulders, making an effort, as it seemed, to dismiss a distressing subject from his mind. Just then one of his clerks entered and handed him a card. He started as he read the name it bore. After a moment's hesitation he said, "You must show him in, Booth."

A young man entered, dressed in deep mourning.

"Mr. Ernest Delpratt?" Mr. Merdock was reading aloud the name on the card.

"You have forgotten me, I see, Mr. Merdock. But it is not surprising. We have not met for some years. I know that I am much changed in appearance. I was a mere boy then."

"Pray be seated."

He was now perhaps about thirty; wearing a thick red-brown beard, and rather long hair falling negligently across his forehead. His natural pallor was no doubt increased in effect by the black clothes he wore. But his complexion was of that deadly whiteness which knows little variation, and resists all influence of temperature, refusing to be bronzed by the sun, or reddened by exposure to the wind. It was late in the year, but the weather was unnaturally sultry. Still it had not brought any increase of colour to his face; only the glisten of clamminess on the surface of his skin.

"You are aware, of course, of the sad occurrence that has brought me here?"

"I have only just read in the Times of Mr. Delpratt's death." Mr. Merdock's manner was reserved, even distant.

"You knew him intimately?"

"I can scarcely say so much as that. I saw him frequently at one time. But of late years we seldom met. I rarely quit London, he rarely visited it. Still I regarded him as a friend. I heard from him occasionally. He was kind enough always to address me in the most cordial terms. I have learnt of his death with extreme regret."

"But you were his professional adviser; you know more of his private affairs than any one?"

"That may be so," said Mr. Merdock, coldly.

"He executed a will, in your presence, some ten years ago?"

Mr. Merdock made no reply.

"I should explain," the young man went on, "that as his sole surviving relative——"

"Pardon me," Merdock interrupted, "legally speaking, the late Mr. Delpratt had no relatives."

"Perhaps so—but he always regarded and spoke of me as his cousin, or rather as his first cousin once removed. I therefore deemed it my duty to search for his will to ascertain if he had expressed in it any instructions in relation to his funeral. I hope that you see nothing objectionable in that?"

Mr. Merdock merely bowed. He avoided any statement of opinion on the subject.

"The will I found contained no instructions of the kind referred to. Further of its terms I need not speak just now; especially as the document having been drawn by you, you are already acquainted with its contents."

"The only will of which I know anything," said Mr. Merdock, after a minute's deliberation, "was executed by the testator in my presence some ten years ago. The will was engrossed in duplicate—a course I am in the habit of recommending in such cases—as a matter of prudence and precaution. One copy is now in my iron safe. The other, the testator took into his own keeping. That is, I presume, the document to which you have been referring."

"No doubt."

"Let us be quite sure," said Mr. Merdock, still with his air of deliberation. He left the room. Presently he returned. "The will bore date the 18th of March, 1859."

"That is the will in question. It was found in Mr. Delpratt's desk."

"You found none of later date? No will or codicil?"

"No, though I made careful search. Some rough memoranda as to the disposal of his property I did find, but these were unsigned—mere notes of an informal character. Nothing in the nature of a will. You know of none?"

"I know of none."

There was a pause. Mr. Merdock took a pinch of snuff.

"Mr. Delpratt died rather suddenly—that is to say he had been suffering, as all his household well knew, from disease of the heart of long standing. Still none looked for his illness terminating fatally at so early a date. His medical attendant visited him frequently of late. He was

not present, however, when the sad event occurred. He is fully satisfied, however, as to the cause of death. He attributes it to aneurismal hypertrophy of the heart. I am not doctor enough to understand precisely his meaning."

The young man dabbed his white face with his handkerchief. He was much moved, and his voice trembled as he continued.

"I need hardly say that my cousin's death has been a heavy blow to me. As you know, Mr. Merdock, in times past there were many differences between us—due to my folly, to my misconduct, I am now prepared fully to admit. But we had been reconciled. We were on intimate and affectionate terms. I regarded him as my benefactor, and was deeply grateful for all he had done for me. Most unfortunately I was absent from the house at the time of his death."

Mr. Merdock was silent, but he now seemed from under his beetling brows to eye his visitor with a new curiosity. His attention was attracted perhaps by the restlessness that marked the young man's manner. He moved uneasily in his chair, shifting his position constantly, and twisting his handkerchief into a string by the unconscious contortions of his hands.

"I had left the house early in the morning to attend the meet at some few miles distance from Lupton. It was late when I returned. My cousin had then been dead some hours. Coming up to London, to transact some business that could not be postponed, I resolved to call upon you, Mr. Merdock. In the first place I have to request that you will attend the funeral, which is fixed for the 27th, at noon, and in the next place to beg that you will act on my behalf, as my legal adviser, in the new position that devolves upon me under the terms of Mr. Delpratt's will."

"I shall attend the funeral, of course," said the lawyer. "I have sincere respect for the memory of my late friend. I shall attend, if you please, in my character as professional adviser, during many years, of the deceased."

"A carriage shall meet the early train from town at Andover—the nearest station to Lupton Manor."

"Any business arrangements in regard to your own future position it may be well perhaps to defer until after the funeral."

"As you think best. Good morning, Mr. Merdock. I will only add a hope that you will dismiss any prejudice you may

have formed against me in relation to my life in the past. I do assure you that I am a different man. I am not now as you once knew me. Good morning."

They shook hands and parted. Mr. Merdock resumed his desk, after carefully rubbing his fingers with his silk handkerchief. They had been left so cold and clammy by his visitor's grasp.

Apparently Mr. Merdock was not industriously inclined that day, or he was preoccupied; his attention was absorbed by the news of the death of his friend and client, Eustace Vere Delpratt. He found a difficulty in devoting himself to other matters. He sat idly in his chair, glancing now at the tin box, now at the first column of the Times newspaper, now at the graveyard outside his window. And at intervals he studied the card of Mr. Ernest Delpratt.

Later in the day the lawyer's room was abruptly entered by Mr. Pixley, the secretary of the Albatross Insurance Company, of which institution Mr. Merdock had been for many years the solicitor.

"I was passing, Merdock, so I thought I'd look in," said Mr. Pixley, an active, bustling gentleman, who always declined a chair, finding that he could talk with greater ease if permitted an erect posture with space for free movement and gesticulation. "We're in for a heavy claim. The matter's not ripe for discussion, but it's worth mentioning. I don't say that it's suspicious as yet; but it's odd, and sooner or later, I take it, you'll have to look into it for us. Yet the parties are of great respectability; they always are, I notice, in cases of an unpleasant complexion. And it's odd, as I said. The life only dropped four days ago. Yet already it's been thought advisable to notify the fact to us, and the party most interested has called in person at the office. Now I consider that rather sharp work. What can be the reason of it? It's a policy of long standing—a heavy risk—we divided it of course with other offices, but still we stand to lose a large amount. The sum insured, with accumulated bonuses, makes a heavy total. Is it all fair? That's the question."

"That's the name of the gentleman who called upon you," said Mr. Merdock, and he handed the secretary Mr. Ernest Delpratt's card.

"The very man. You've seen him also? Upon my word he doesn't let the grass grow under his feet."

"He didn't come here about the insurance. But I happen to know a good deal

about the case. The late Mr. Delpratt was a client of mine. It was through me the insurance was effected. He was the natural son of old Joshua Delpratt, who bequeathed to him absolutely the Lupton Manor estate—a property of considerable value in Hampshire. Joshua Delpratt was never married. His presumptive heir was his nephew, Delamere Delpratt, the father of Ernest. You follow me?"

"You're getting complicated. But at present, I understand."

"Delamere Delpratt was a scoundrel, and Joshua proclaimed his intention to leave all he possessed to Eustace, rather than to his nephew, Delamere, who had brought disgrace upon the family. To assist Delamere, Eustace borrowed a large sum of money. This was in Joshua's lifetime, mind. Eustace could not of course charge the estates, which he was only to acquire under the will of a man who was still living, and who might at any time change his mind as to the disposal of his property. The only security Eustace could offer was his reversionary interest in a sum in the funds invested for the benefit of his mother, and the subject indeed of the Delpratt Trust, the deeds and papers of which are in that tin box beside you. Further, he could, as he did, insure his life heavily, lodge the policies, and bind himself to pay the premiums regularly. Of the money advanced Eustace never touched a halfpenny. All was absorbed by Delamere. On coming into possession of the estates, Eustace paid off the loan, but thought it worth while to keep up the policies. He had especially in view the benefit of the legitimate members of the family. Of these the man you saw to-day——"

"I did not see him," interrupted Mr. Pixley. "I was engaged when he called. But I heard of his visit from the assistant-secretary, who had some conversation with him."

"Well, of these Ernest Delpratt is now the sole representative; for Delamere, his father, died, of drink, many years ago, leaving no other issue. Eustace, my old friend and client, left no children. Here you have, briefly told, the story of the Delpratts."

"Then this Ernest is the last of the race?"

"The last of the race."

"His father, you say, was a scoundrel; and he?"

"Well, I'd rather defer my opinion. We mustn't be in a hurry. He is, clearly

—and there he's wrong. Hurry, needless hurry—and hurry is generally needless—provokes distrust. The case must be looked into, but very quietly.”

“In suspicious cases——”

“Mind, I don't say that this is suspicious as yet,” interrupted Mr. Merdock.

“Let me continue. In suspicious cases what we have to inquire is, who is the person who benefits by the death of the insured? If wrong's been done, there must be an inducement, a motive for it. Find out that and——”

“My dear Pixley, hadn't you better leave it all to me? Don't keep a dog and bark yourself. I'll attend to it. I'm going to the funeral on the 27th.”

“You are? Then I've nothing more to say; only keep me informed of everything.”

“Of everything. And mind you do the same towards me.”

That night Mr. Merdock left London.

On the morning of the 27th of November a carriage from Lupton Manor was waiting at the Andover station to meet the early train from London. Mr. Merdock, however, stood on the platform of the station some time before the arrival of the train. He was dressed in deep black, and looked worn and anxious. Among the passengers brought down from town was Mr. Pixley. Mr. Merdock hastened towards him, and drew him aside.

“You got my letter, of course? Now be very careful, Pixley. Don't say a word more than you can help. There's a carriage waiting to take us to Lupton, a pleasant drive over the Hampshire downs. The driver's been resting at the Andover Arms; he only drew up to the station when the train was in sight. He supposes that we both came down by the train. You're understood to be my clerk. You would come, and you must accept that position. But be very careful what you say. Not a word more now. You're from Lupton, coachman? To meet a gentleman from London? Quite right.”

They entered the carriage, and were driven from the station.

“Pull up that window, Pixley. That fellow mustn't hear us. This is a delicate matter, and we must proceed very cautiously.”

“Well? And what's been done?”

“I've not been idle, but, I'll own, I've but a poor case as yet. I can't get much beyond suspicion. I cannot arrive at proof. Still, I've set two or three at work, and

something may come out at any moment. I couldn't appear actively in the matter myself, for many reasons. We must lull suspicion as much as possible. The criminal, if there is one—and, mind, I won't yet say that there is one—will then grow bolder, imprudent, perhaps, and then we have a chance.”

“The funeral will proceed?”

“Not so loud. Yes. You know, or, perhaps, you don't know, what country coroners are. And we've scarcely a pretext for demanding an inquest. The doctor, a local practitioner, sticks to his aneurismal hypertrophy. What can we do in the face of his certificate? The servants have been got at, not by me—I did not dare go near the house—and questioned skilfully enough, without awakening their suspicions. Something has been gathered that may be of importance. A hint of physic bottles destroyed immediately after the death of Mr. Delpratt. But it's nothing like clear enough at present, and there may be nothing in it.”

“But if the funeral——”

“The funeral doesn't matter. If we've any evidence to go upon, we can obtain from the Home Office an order for disinterment. Never mind about the funeral. Get that over quietly; it may be all the better for us.”

“But the other doctor, who gave a hint to the office——”

“I've seen him, and it only comes to this—he suspects. He was dismissed from attendance upon the deceased three weeks ago; so, you know, he couldn't have seen poor Delpratt during his last fortnight of life. Still, he mentioned some facts that were worth noting. At the same time, you know, he may be charged with being actuated by professional jealousy—a doctor dismissed for incompetence, that's how it would be put to a jury.”

“But what does he suspect?”

“Suspicious, mind, amount to nothing, unless you can support them with evidence of facts, and that we can't do at present. But he suspects—bend your head.” Mr. Merdock clutched his companion by the fore-arm, and whispered into his ear—“he suspects that the medicines were tampered with, and that death resulted from the administration of—poison—probably arsenic, in small but frequent doses. That could only have been done by some one in constant attendance upon the deceased.”

“And we know that Ernest Delpratt had opportunities of that kind.”

"Yes; that we know. He sat up some nights with the deceased, was with him, indeed, continually, except on the day of his death, then he was absent, out all day—hunting, he told me. He lied. I've ascertained that. He did go to the meet. But there was but a poor day's sport, a short run with a young fox, and a kill in Darrington Plantations, only a few miles from Lupton. He might have been home by two o'clock. But he stayed drinking in a little public-house on the Purham-road. So, you see, he lied. That doesn't surprise me; he was always a liar, as his father was before him. It looks like administering the last fatal dose, and then keeping out of the way of the closing scene to avoid suspicion. On the other hand, an innocent man might have put up at the public, and afterwards, being ashamed of himself, have given a false account of his conduct for the sake of decency."

"He was on good terms with the deceased?"

"Yes. Not so good as he'd make out, but still on good terms. He'd been forgiven, and made welcome to the manor-house. Poor Delpratt, I take it, was trying to like him, and, on the whole, the young man had behaved pretty well of late. It had been different formerly. In truth, Ernest was as bad as Delamere had been. Dismissed from the army before he was twenty for disgraceful conduct—cheating at cards—then guilty of what's called, in plain terms, at the Old Bailey, forgery. But the thing was hushed up, and the young man was packed off to Australia. Poor Delpratt, always feeling acutely his own position, and doing his best to serve the legitimate members of the family, gave him up then as a bad job. But he probably softened towards him of late years, believed in his reform, and viewed him even affectionately."

"Who was with him at the time of his death?"

"No one. There we're weak. He had certainly heart disease of considerable standing—sufficient, perhaps, to account for his death. There's only this to add. He is known to have complained of the strange taste of his medicines, and of the great internal pain and burning thirst they provoked."

"After all, as you said yourself, Merdock, just now, it's but a poor case."

"I repeat it—a poor case."

"I don't see that we've any grounds for resisting payment of the policy."

"Perhaps not, as yet. But never rush at conclusions, Pixley. We've time before us, and many things may happen. And mind, in any case, I mean to spring a mine upon that young man such as he little dreams of. Eustace Delpratt was my friend. I don't forget that. Hush! We've arrived. Remember, you're my clerk."

The funeral was of a simple kind. It was chiefly remarkable, perhaps, for its paucity of mourners. But, as Mr. Merdock had explained, the late Mr. Delpratt had, legally speaking, no relatives. No "inheritable blood," to use the conveyancers' term, had flowed in his veins, and he had died childless.

Ernest Delpratt was the chief mourner. He was accompanied by certain members of his mother's family, thus indirectly connected with the deceased. A clergyman or two from neighbouring parishes, who had been on friendly terms with Mr. Delpratt, and whose flocks had received aid from his benevolence; the doctor and, of course, Mr. Merdock, were in attendance. The gentry of the district sent their carriages, and round the grave were grouped numerous tenants, farm-labourers, and poor folk resident upon Lupton Manor, who were moved to pay a last tribute of respect to its departed proprietor. He had been to them invariably kind and generous—had never been known to act harshly, or to speak ungently. They regretted his loss deeply and sincerely, the more especially that they seemed to view with some distrust the gentleman who was recognised on all sides as the future squire of Lupton Manor. Of Ernest Delpratt's position none entertained any doubt. It was thoroughly understood that to him the late Eustace Delpratt had bequeathed his entire possessions absolutely.

"Keep close to me, Pixley," Mr. Merdock whispered to his friend, after the funeral ceremony was concluded, and the mourners had returned to the manor-house. Then he added aloud, "I wish it to be fully known that I have attended here to-day as the friend for many years, and the professional adviser, of the late Eustace Vere Delpratt."

"That is quite understood," said Ernest Delpratt, rather impatiently. "It is now proposed that in that character you should read the will of the deceased." He placed upon the table a small packet, the seals of which had been broken.

"You wish me to do so?"

"Certainly. I wish all the usual forms

to be observed on this melancholy occasion."

"Be it so, then. And you produce this document as the last will of the late Mr. Eustace Vere Delpratt?"

Only a small party was assembled in the spacious library of Lupton Manor. Ernest Delpratt moved anxiously from one to the other. He was very pale, he spoke in low, agitated tones, and his hands trembled exceedingly.

Mr. Merdock took his seat at the head of the table. He placed beside him a small black leather bag.

"The will you produce," he said, with a grave business-like air, turning towards Ernest Delpratt, "bears date the 18th of March, 1859. It was drawn by me, and my name appears as that of one of the witnesses, attesting the due execution of the document by the testator. By this will the whole of Mr. Eustace Delpratt's estate, both real and personal, is bequeathed to you, and you are appointed his sole executor. You produce this as his last will and testament? You know of no other will or codicil executed by the deceased?"

"He executed no other will or codicil," said Ernest, in a low, faint voice.

"The deceased had, however, it seems, some little time since, contemplated making a new disposition of his property. He had drawn up a few notes and memoranda. He designed to make a handsome provision for Mr. Ernest Delpratt, but the residue of his estate he purposed to apply in a different way. But I need not go into that. Mr. Eustace Vere Delpratt did not survive to make a new will, and these brief writings of his are without legal value."

Mr. Merdock paused, and took a pinch of snuff. An intense quiet prevailed in the room. The quick breathing of Ernest was plainly audible. He brushed his hair from his glistening deadly-white face. Then, as though perceiving how much his hand trembled, he withdrew it hurriedly, and thrust it out of sight under the table. The other persons present, though yet well aware that they were likely to benefit in no way by the deceased's disposition of his estate, seemed yet, in spite of themselves, curiously interested in the proceedings. They were impressed, perhaps, by the gravity and deliberation of Mr. Merdock's manner.

"I have now to state," he continued, raising his voice somewhat, "that practically, this document notwithstanding, the late Eustace Vere Delpratt died intestate."

There was a murmur of surprise. Ernest Delpratt rose from his seat, and raised his hand. He tried to speak, but his voice appeared to fail him.

"Three years after its execution, this will was revoked."

"By deed?" some one asked.

"No. By the adoption of another course, not less decisive. In fact, by marriage."

"It's a lie!" Ernest Delpratt screamed, hoarsely.

"The late Mr. Delpratt," the lawyer proceeded, calmly, "was married in January, 1862, at the chapel of the embassy, in Paris, to Hortense Leroux, a French actress. Legal proof of that marriage I have with me. Into the details of the matter I need hardly enter. I may state, however, that in early life Mr. Delpratt had met with severe disappointment. He had contemplated an alliance with a young lady, a member of one of the most distinguished families of this county. To that union the stain upon his birth was deemed by the lady's friends an insuperable objection. The engagement, if such it may be called, was therefore abruptly terminated. Mr. Delpratt was deeply afflicted. He determined never to marry. Some time afterwards he made this will, bequeathing his entire property to the only surviving legitimate member of his family—Mr. Ernest Delpratt. But he had reason at a later date to be much offended at the conduct of the man his generosity would have enriched. To the peculiar circumstances of the case I will not further allude. Mr. Ernest Delpratt left England, and was for nearly ten years absent in Australia. In the interval my late friend and client again turned his thoughts towards marriage. He resolved to find a wife among a class little likely to be affected by the circumstances of his origin. Chance threw him in the way of this Hortense Leroux. She is now dead; I will bring no charge against her therefore. I will only say that she was in every way unworthy of her husband, and that the marriage was a most unhappy one. The newly-wedded pair separated for ever within a few weeks of their union. She was amply provided for, but survived only a few years, meeting her death under very painful circumstances. Her dress accidentally caught fire, and she was burnt to death upon the stage of the Lyons Theatre. Mr. Delpratt's marriage was kept a strict secret. It had been solemnised privately, and was known to very few. He never

alluded to it. It was a distressing incident in his life, which he desired to forget. He placed the proofs of the marriage in my hands some years since. Of its validity there can be no question whatever."

"It's a trumped-up story," cried Ernest, with a livid face. "I'll go to law. I'll establish the will. It's monstrous to suppose that it could be revoked by such a marriage."

"I will simply refer you to the Act of the first Victoria, chapter twenty-six, section eighteen," said the lawyer. "But you will, of course, proceed as you are advised. Only you will distinctly understand that I decline to act on your behalf; that I am not, and that I never will accept the position of your legal adviser. I attended here, as I before stated, solely in my character of solicitor to my late friend, Mr. Delpratt. Gentlemen, I do not think I need trouble you with any further observations. This will is waste-paper. It was revoked by Mr. Delpratt's marriage. He was well aware of its revocation. He intended to revoke it. He had grave fault to find with Mr. Ernest Delpratt's conduct, and did not design to bequeath him Lupton Manor and his other possessions. Subsequently he was disposed, however, to make some provision for the young man. But his intentions in that respect were prevented by his death."

A servant entered and handed a note to Mr. Merdock.

The company rose, and prepared to quit a scene that had become strangely painful.

"And the property?" one asked.

"Mr. Delpratt dying intestate, and without legal heirs, his property goes to the Crown."

"It can't be—it shan't be," Ernest cried, wildly. "I'll not be swindled in this shameful way. I'll enforce my rights. I'll establish the will. At least the amount of the insurances shall be mine. The policies are in my possession. They were legally assigned to me. I can prove it. It has always been understood that they were intended for my benefit."

"In regard to one of those insurances I am at liberty to state that, acting upon my advice, the directors of the Albatross Office will refuse payment of the claim."

The lawyer looked the young man very steadily in the face.

"What next? What are you going to charge me with next? Refuse payment? How dare you? Why—do you think I poisoned the man?"

"We know you did!" said Mr. Merdock, quickly, in a low tone, as he struck his clenched hand sharply upon the table, and handed the note he had just received to Ernest Delpratt.

He clutched it tremblingly; read it with raging eyes. Then it fell from his shaking fingers, and fluttered on to the floor. He gave a strange, piteous moan; raised his hands, and pressed them against his head, as though to still some terribly acute pain.

"I'm ill," he murmured, faintly. "Let me get some fresh air. I shall be better presently—I shall"—and he staggered from the room.

Mr. Merdock found himself left alone with Mr. Pixley.

"I told you I should spring a mine upon that young man," said the lawyer, quietly. "I think I've been as good as my word."

"What was that note you handed him?"

"Read it."

Mr. Pixley took the paper from the floor and read: "E. D. bought arsenic of Gibbons, chemist, Catherine-street, Salisbury, on the 17th and 29th October, and the 20th November."

"It's from a very careful fellow who's been helping me to investigate this matter. I was in hopes I should have heard from him last night. However, the note came in time. Whether I did right to show it him I'm not sure. Perhaps not. But I felt a longing quite uncontrollable to crush the villain. It's wrong to be revengeful; it interferes with business arrangements. But I owed something to the memory of my poor friend. That villain felt the blow. How he winced!"

"He's certainly a villain, if there ever was one," remarked Mr. Pixley.

"And now I can tell you something more about him. You're fond of dwelling upon the motives that lead to crime, Pixley. At the same time I may tell you that you omit from your calculations the fact that much wickedness in this world is accomplished at a very cheap price, so to say—for very inadequate reasons. There was motive enough in this case, however—more than enough. Ernest Delpratt had of course discovered the will in his favour, never dreaming that it had been revoked, or of the manner of its revocation. But more than that. The man is a gambler, and deeply involved. He owes at least five thousand pounds. He is a defaulter upon the turf, and he has forged acceptances in the deceased's name. I have ascertained that. Bills are falling due at

the Branch Bank at Andover, which he must meet, or prepare for exposure, if not arrest. So he determines upon the murder of his benefactor. Once the proprietor of Lupton Manor all will go well with him, he thinks. But he was in too great a hurry. If he had only waited a little, a new will, under which he was largely to benefit, would have been executed. Something his crime would then have brought him. As it is, he gets nothing; he simply beggars himself. Murdering Mr. Delpratt, as he did, in fact, the murderer, to speak plainly, cuts his own throat!"

A strange noise was heard in the hall outside the library door. The servants, greatly excited, entered the room. It was some moments before they could relate intelligibly the tidings they brought.

The body of Ernest Delpratt had been discovered lying on the floor of one of the upper rooms of Lupton Manor House. His one hand clutched a razor, with which he had inflicted frightful wounds upon himself. He was quite dead.

It was the room in which Eustace Vere Delpratt had met his death by poison.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL SEED," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XII. RECONCILIATION.

A FLUSH of joy rushed to her face. But she recollected herself, and drew back from his extended arms.

"It was cruel, pitiless, unkind," she said, in a low voice. "You cannot repair it."

"I will do anything—whatever you wish!" he exclaimed, passionately. "I have been wretched ever since. I have come back to you, and have left her. I will do all you wish."

"Sing at our concert, I suppose," she answered, with ineffable scorn. "You are most gracious indeed."

"You know not what I have passed through to come here. They will never forgive me at home."

"It is I who cannot forgive," answered she, coldly. "It did not cost you much to leave us. I almost felt contempt for you as I saw you led away. You say that you have suffered, but what has been my state ever since, exposed to the humiliating remarks of the people whom I am to face to-night."

"What can they say," he said, eagerly, "when they see me beside you? Those who laughed will be triumphantly refuted."

"No. I cannot consent to it. One such trial is enough for me. I cannot risk another."

"You cannot help it," he said. "I am here now. They will all see me here to-night, at your feet, that is, down in the front row, looking at you. There will be no mortification in that for you. I am the one that will suffer, at home. Come, you can't be so cruel to me. Let us be happy for this night, at least."

Corinna was softening. She could not be angry with this repentant prodigal, whom in her heart of hearts she loved. Entered at this moment Mr. Nagle, rigid and creased in his Georgian neckerchief, who gave a start as he saw the truant returned. He called up a frown. But the beaming face of Corinna showed him that all was right.

Mr. Nagle clasped him in his arms, as it were. "My dear gallant young friend," he said, "this is noble! But I think it is time we should be at the rooms. The fly is at the door. We can give you a seat—eh?" The truth was, Mr. Nagle was so filled with the excitement of his present enterprise, and the prospect of his own personal glories, that this little affair of his daughter's had become quite a minor concern. The young people did not much heed this. There was a delightful excitement abroad. Paradise appeared to be opening before them. The past was forgotten.

But another figure had joined the party, and Mr. Doughty, violin-case in hand, stood in the doorway. Mr. Nagle turned on him impatiently.

"Well, my good sir, what is it now?"

Old Doughty's eyes were fixed with a curious, anxious look on the pair; an almost angry look. He walked over to Corinna.

"It will be a great opportunity," he said, "and you will carry them all by storm. There is the song—I have transposed it. It will suit your voice to perfection."

Corinna was embarrassed. Matters had entirely changed. She had no object now in seeking to wring her lover's heart, and to make an exhibition on the platform.

"I am afraid, Mr. Doughty," she said, gently, "we must give it up. Papa has settled everything, and will not have his programme altered."

"I see," he answered, in a hard, bitter tone, "make no excuses. This gentleman has returned. He is to exhibit himself, and all, music, everything, must give place. It is only one illusion more. I suppose this gentleman will be put forward to sing his ballad——"

Mr. Nagle interposed.

"My good sir, this is interfering. You are going a little too far. This gentleman is a particular and warm friend of ours, who has behaved in the most chivalric style. I really can't have it."

"Quite right," said the other; "I had no business to interfere. I have brought this all on myself. Perhaps you may be a little sorry for this; you may see your mistake, it may be, before the night is over."

With these singular words, Mr. Doughty disappeared, leaving his hearers not a little astonished.

"A poor creature," said Mr. Nagle, with pity; "lives in a small, hungry way, I am told, which makes him eccentric."

CHAPTER XIII. THE CONCERT.

THE concert began. The wonderful Nagle family appeared under all the forms and conditions set down for them: Mr. Nagle being conductor, leader, accompanist, solo singer, duet singer—leader off and on, and speech maker. There was no reason why the performance should not go on in the order set down in the bills; but the entrepreneur, or Enterprenner, as he would have styled it, was perpetually coming forward in express style, as though he had just received a telegraphic message to make a little speech such as: "Ladies and gentlemen, it has become necessary to solicit your indulgence for a trifling change in the programme. We shall, with your kind permission, take the ballad now, and postpone the duet, thus transposing the two. I trust that this little departure from the order set down will not be visited with your disapprobation." All of course applauded loudly. Mr. Nagle did not retire. He had a few more words to add. "I may take this opportunity of stating that the song which comes next but one in our list, namely, the never-dying Death of Nelson, if I may use the expression, will be sung precisely as its lamented author, the immortal Braham, sang it in presence of the Princess Charlotte!" The name of this royal personage impressed the audience, and extorted applause. "This interesting fact I felt sure would be received with satisfaction by the intelligent audience whom I am addressing; and I may take this opportunity of adding, that no more accomplished artist, or more kindly, less puffed-up being, ever drew the breath of life than Braham, at whose feet I had the honour of sitting in early life."

It was a treat to hear Mr. Nagle chanting the lamented but glorious end

of England's hero. He (Mr. Nagle) had the whole platform, orchestra, desks, &c., to himself, an assistant having previously entered and removed the upper portion of the piano, so as to let the fullest volume of, as it were, naval sound escape. The singer entered slowly, with sorrow, and even gloom, on his features. Then, seating himself, he shook his head mournfully, and allowed his fingers to stray about the keys in a wild fashion, his eyes being fixed on the ceiling. Presently he nerved himself for the effort, and struck up the triumphant strain with which the ditty is inaugurated. He seemed to be on the quarter-deck declaiming about the glorious conflict; and when he had finished each detail of the story, he dipped his head down low for long confidential communication with his fingers. But when he reached the record of the hero's fall, and minor wailing chords, the whole story might be read in his agonised face. The drummer of the establishment was placed in ambuscade, and signified the fatal shot by a startling stroke on his instrument. The stagger of Mr. Nagle was fine; his bewildered stare in the direction of the murderous gun told his emotion. There the whole story of the admiral's bleeding wounds might be traced; the voice faltered; the fingers, like tottering limbs, feebly limped from note to note; the sounds seemed to choke in his throat; all the woes of England seemed to be borne on his sorrowing head. This, however, was relieved by the triumphant fashion with which he proclaimed the issue of the glorious day—the noble confession of the mother country that every man that day had done his duty—had done his d'yewty!

All this pantomime was new to the audience; indeed, it was not generally known that Mr. Nagle had once been prevailed on to come forward at the Brighton Theatre on the occasion of a friend's benefit, and had sung the stirring lay in the costume of a British tar, his neck comparatively bare, collar confined by a slender ribbon, flowing trousers, &c. A simple accompaniment of the piano was all that was required, but his dramatic instinct had supplied an artful addition.

Mr. Nagle noticed during the night that the audience seemed to be not a little distracted from his efforts by something "in the body of the hall," as he phrased it. One disturbance was of course the presence of the gallant prodigal, Mr. Duke, on whom all eyes and opera-glasses were concentrated. There he sat in a stall in

the front row, and when Corinna came forward to sing her song, there were but few who followed the young lady's performance, most of those present eagerly watching his enthusiastic face. The other incident that distracted Mr. Nagle was the sort of interest that attended Old Doughty. During the interval between the first and second parts he noted that quite a group was gathered round that gentleman, who seemed to be receiving what seemed congratulations, which he accepted languidly. Presently Will Gardiner came round to the artist's room overflowing with triumph, and roaring out a cataract of "splendid," "grand," "carrying the whole place by storm," and the like, having, too, his arm in that of Mr. Doughty, whom he led in obstreperously. The latter went up to Corinna a little timidly.

"I shall have to leave this to-morrow morning," he said, "on business; so I shall not have an opportunity of speaking to you. You have real genius, which might be developed and made to do wonders. But I see you do not care for my advice, which you think old-fashioned."

The gentle heart of Corinna had felt some pangs at the unceremonious way in which this person who had shown an interest in her had been treated, and answered eagerly:

"Indeed, I wished to tell you how much I feel your kindness, but in the flutter and excitement I was hasty. You must consider this, that I have others whose wishes I must follow."

"Perhaps so," he answered, hastily. "But I wish you to know this. Circumstances now may allow me to be of use to you—of great use perhaps—that is if you would permit it, and——"

At this moment came up Will Gardiner, leading Mr. Nagle.

"Look there, Nagle. There's the lucky man of the day! Croesus is a pauper to him."

Mr. Nagle started, and looked round a little wildly. Croesus!

"He has a telegram in his pocket at this moment, worth, I should say, a hundred and fifty thousand pounds."

"Good Heavens!" cried Mr. Nagle, as naturally as though he had heard the house was on fire.

Will Gardiner was right. News had come down to Old Doughty just before the concert began, that an old club friend, who had made money in India, and who had lived a bachelor life like himself, was dead, and by his will had made Old Doughty his heir to that amount. From that moment

Old Doughty was to be Old Doughty no more. He became young and handsome, interesting, influential, authoritative, and ceased to be eccentric.

It was astonishing what a change was produced in all parties by this piece of news. The fortunate inheritor stood there, the centre of all—king, prophet, commander. Had he chosen to do so, he had only to signify his desire that the concert should cease and the listeners disperse, and his behests would have been carried out. Mr. Nagle would have come forth on the platform and made an announcement to that effect. But the distress of that gentleman was really comical. What a blunder, he thought, had he committed, throwing cold water, literally in tubfuls, on such good-natured offers! He had almost insulted such a kind friend. What infatuation! Was it too late? With some hesitation he suggested, why not have something classical—that thing of Glück's for instance, which the classical taste of Mr. Doughty had——

The deep look of humiliation and reproach in Corinna's face, and her exclamation of wounded pride, "Oh, papa!" checked the further statement of the proposal. Mr. Doughty smiled with good-humoured contempt.

"Never think of that," he said to Corinna. "I shall not recollect such things. I know the world pretty well, and can make allowance. But your friend here," he said, noticing Alfred Duke, who was looking on rather ruefully at a distance, "are we not to hear him to-night? Surely after his coming such a distance that is a privilege with which we might expect to be favoured."

There was a spitefulness in his manner, as he looked towards the young man, joined with a sharp dislike. But now it was time to recommence the music, and the whole party left the room to return to their seats.

When the performance was over, it was understood that Mr. Nagle would give a select little supper to a few friends up at the Crescent. Thither repaired Will Gardiner, and his brother the parson, young Duke, and Mr. Doughty; the latter, hitherto overlooked and neglected as an obscure being, of no account whatever, finding himself the distinguished guest of the evening. The host's position was one of some embarrassment; but he contrived to extricate himself with much dexterity on the ground of candour, plain speaking, and of having incurred the eternal enmity

of his child. "I am in Corry's black books for ever and aye. But Mr. Public is a terribly low fellow, and we must feed him on garbage. Garbage, sir, musical garbage, sir, is the only thing that goes down," &c.

Mr. Doughty was somehow placed beside Corinna, but that young lady, to her father's annoyance, was cold and reserved. All, however, were in good spirits, save Mr. Duke, whose great sacrifice, defiance of his family, &c.—which seemed to him the grandest, noblest, and most heroic act in the world—was now to be accepted tamely, and quite as a thing of course. Indeed there was room for no one else but the centre figure. Every one felt more or less under a sense of constraint in the presence of the shy and modest person who was yet in possession of such a sum as one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. Will Gardiner, who was as liable to be depressed as elevated, was gloomy, for he felt that, with his large family and not over-abundant resources, he had foolishly cast away a great chance in not having persistently made Old Doughty his own. His clergyman brother was also a little distraught, possibly thinking of this goose with the golden eggs which might have been flapping its wings, as he thought, in his private farm-yard. The evening was therefore marked by constraint; though it must be said that Mr. Nagle gave way to his good spirits, told anecdotes of musical interest, and with a boldness that all might admire, but find hard to imitate, praised the gifts of one of the most consummate amateurs breathing, and whom they had at that moment among them—a man with the true soul for music, whom his musical guide, philosopher, and friend, the late immortal Braham, would have been proud to take by the hand.

Corinna listened with pain to these compliments, and treated the object of them sitting by her side with fresh coldness. Will Gardiner also listened with a sort of suspicion and dislike. His brother, too, the clergyman, did not appear to have much appreciation for Mr. Nagle's jests.

The party broke up early, and the festival was to be marked by this singular phenomenon. The enthusiastic Will Gardiner, who had worked so hard for the Nagles, entered his own house moodily, and in reply to a question of his lady's, as to how he had enjoyed himself, declared that "He was sick of that mountebank Nagle, who was a knowing schemer, who would try and do them if he could." A

sentiment that not a little mystified his wife and family.

The sudden good fortune of Mr. Doughty may seem something in the nature of a coup de théâtre. But when the facts were known, there was nothing so very surprising in it. Old Doughty, as some may have guessed, was one of those who suffer from the injustice of the public; the world being too busy to take the trouble of separating what is accidental from what is genuine, and being apt to fasten upon outward peculiarities and eccentricities as if they represented, without doubt, the real man. He had, however, fallen in with a retired Indian official, who "scraped" a good deal (as regards time and friction, though not as regards excellence and skill) on the 'cello; who, during many years of harmony with the German assistants, had learned that in this thistley husk lay a kindliness, a charity, a chivalry even, of which at first he had had no conception. When this Indian fell ill, Old Doughty nursed him with a tender interest and devotion until he was completely restored. This old gentleman was a little eccentric, lived in a quiet, unostentatious way, and among persons who knew nothing about him. He had no relations. Not one of the friends who "fiddled" with him dreamed that he possessed this enormous fortune. And when his death came no one was so amazed or confounded as Old Doughty.

In Brickford, the great news devoured the exciting event of the Nagle Concert. The intelligence was known actually in the rooms, about the second part of the concert, and a prodigious interest excited. There was quite a buzz of voices. The spare figure, and the intelligent, rather worn face, bent with a devotional adoration towards the classical face of the heroine as she poured forth her lay. "The Nagles have got him! The Nagles will get him!" was the whisper oftenest whispered in the hall. And there was in consequence a decided revulsion of feeling against the benefi- ciare. A hundred and fifty thousand pounds connected with that professor-like little man. It was incredible! But, as we have seen, he had already cast his old skin, and was there before the ladies of Brickford a beautiful and engaging young man.

He was gone in the morning by the nine o'clock express. He was attended to the station by "that scheming Nagle," who blessed him many times—and in the loudest tones—as the train moved away from the platform. Will Gardiner came to the Cres-

cent during that day, but he was thoroughly genuine; he could not conceal what was in his thoughts. "Doughty seems to have taken a fancy to Miss Corinna, but you mustn't reckon on his marrying. She won't give up the old love, I hope, who has given up so much for her."

"Oh, I don't know that," said Mr. Nagle, loftily. "It would be a poor thing for a girl of her talents and prospects. The young fellow has quarrelled with his parents. That's not what will do for us, you know."

"Why, God bless me, man alive," said Will, in a burst of warmth, "you are not going to play shilly-shally with your girl's affections in this style. You are not going to fly her like a hawk at every sort of game!"

"I scarcely comprehend you," said Mr. Nagle, "and the expression is scarcely appropriate. Game! Come, come, isn't that a little too—what you may call it?"

"Ah, Master Nagle, you haven't gone round the towns, or sat at the feet of Braham, as you call it, for nothing."

All this was merely in the nature of quiet skirmishing. But when it was known that Mr. Nagle had selected a handsome furnished house, acting under instructions from his friend—a house where there was a large room to serve as a music-room, and was bustling about "ordering in things," the disgust of the Gardiners could not be restrained. This spacious apartment, Mr. Nagle hinted, would be the scene of the future Harmonic Matinées. Such a slight rankled in the mind of Will Gardiner, who again and again bewailed his own stupidity in not having made more of their relation when he was not so prosperous, though it must be said that his wrath was excited not so much against Mr. Nagle as against Corinna, whom he now considered to be one of the most dangerous, crafty intriguers in the world.

Meanwhile Mr. Duke was behaving in a curiously uncertain fashion. He could not bring himself to go away, and yet while he remained he affected a careless indifference and dignity. The change in Mr. Nagle affected him in the same mortifying way that it did others. That gentleman wore a certain good-humoured indifference, that contrasted oddly with his former empressment and almost nervous eagerness to anticipate every humour. Now he conveyed the idea, "I am really too busy to attend to you." It was infinitely mortifying. Nor did Corinna supply what was wanting in her sire. She could not understand this af-

fect indifference and carelessness, and was too proud to let her real thoughts be seen.

In a fortnight it was known that Mr. Doughty had returned, and was established in his new house. It was handsomely furnished; the music-room had been fitted up superbly, and a magnificent grand piano, with all the latest improvements, had made its majestic appearance. A small platform had been set up at one end of the room, on which the instrument, with two or three music-stands, were placed. All these arrangements were carried out under the superintendence of Mr. Nagle. It was amazing, with the pressure of so many pupils, how he found time for these pursuits; but in the cause of friendship surprising sacrifices are made.

Mr. Doughty was duly installed, and very soon the horny sounds of fiddles proclaimed to Brickford that "Music, heavenly maid," was on active service. Anon the sounds of a piano were heard, and a German gentleman or two, with Corinna presiding at the grand, discoursed that most refined and dignified of earthly performances, a chamber trio or quartet. No matter what the surrounding circumstances, be they squalid or otherwise, if the second violin be some poor threadbare executant out of a transpontine theatre, and the pianoforte player some poor drudge of a music-master at one and six a lesson, and the scene itself a garret, still there is a kind of ennobled air over the whole; the sounds are royal, and, as we listen, the humble roof and walls seem to pass away, and give place to the panelling and decorations of imperial palaces. Corinna, who loved music, and to whom such music, separated from vulgar trade purposes, was a novelty, sat enthroned at the grand, her fingers majestically travelling over the ivory keys, her graceful figure bending over, while her classic head moved in time to the melodies. Of course Brickford put its own interpretation on these meetings. This artful young person was simulating a musical enthusiasm for the purpose of captivating the wealthy amateur. So constant was the attendance, so assiduous his devotion, that the town looked on the whole thing as settled beyond redemption, and decided that the scheming party of musicians had "got him."

These discussions naturally reached Mr. Duke's ears, and he became more miserable than before.

By this time Lady Duke had returned to watch over her son, who was so infatuated that he could not be drawn away from the vicinity of the charming siren. Of course

she had come back to the commercial city for purely maternal interests, which ought to command the sympathies of at least the mothers. But somehow this belief soon came to be discredited, more earthly motives were imputed presently to the matron, mainly, it must be said, owing to the boisterously-expressed opinions of Will Gardiner.

"She has an eye to Doughty's money-bags. That's what has brought her here. I know the woman well. She says she's a distant cousin, or something of the kind, though she always snubbed the poor fellow—wouldn't be seen on the same side of the street with him. She thinks people can't see through this sort of thing."

As to the relationship, Mr. Gardiner certainly did her some injustice, for she was connected, after a sort of third cousinship, with Mr. Doughty. Indeed, the families of Gardiner and Duke were all thus remotely connected, and only a few weeks before they would have made this bond, so far as it concerned Mr. Doughty, as faint to the eye as the edging of a light cloud; now, curiously enough, they would have had it as stout as a ship's cable. The truth was, Lady Duke was a person who had sunk all her capital in "floating" a financial enterprise, namely, the marriage of her two daughters, and had succeeded with one, only, however, to find herself comparatively embarrassed, and with limited means.

This is often a curious delusion with such fashionable speculators, who, when they have succeeded in their aims, find that they have only left themselves poorer in purse and affections. One of her daughters having taken a modest portion, her son being expensive, her own tastes and habits costly, she was but ill-furnished to encounter difficulties; and already old debts and coming obligations were pressing on her. The danger, therefore, of her son's marrying "a low girl without a shilling," filled her with consternation, and with this, and other difficulties on her hands, it was not surprising that she should think of coming to Brickford to watch over her offspring, and cultivate the acquaintance of her newly-enriched relative. This intriguing person had laid out already a daring and comprehensive design.

The young lady who was still on Lady Duke's hands, and who was now to be

devoted to the conquest of Old Doughty, was at a finishing school at Bath. Orders had been already sent to put on extra workmen, as it were, so that the "finishing" should be accomplished with all speed. Miss Perkes, the principal, was instructed to have the musical "hands," in particular, working double tides, so that when vacation time came round, which would be within a couple of months, she would be ready to take her part creditably in the grand combined assault, which was about to be made on the newly-made rich man. This young lady's name was Emmeline, and, it will be seen, was duly fitted for taking her part in this honourable competition. For competition it really was about to be. Almost insensibly a crowd of candidates were getting ready. Mr. Nagle had determined that his Corinna should win. Mr. Gardiner, though his candidate was not more than fifteen or sixteen, determined, in an indistinct sort of way, that the prize should be somehow secured for their family. The clergyman, whose numerous children were all too small to hope for any reasonable chance of success, still looked wistfully to the same object, and thought that he had a reasonable claim to a share in the emolument; and thus the whole group at Brickford were about to be absorbed in an exciting rivalry, which it was probable would have a serious effect on the relation of all parties.

A suitable house had been secured for Lady Duke, who brought her servants, carriage, &c., and every article that belonged to her, save her husband, who had to attend to his military duties. The siege was about to commence in earnest. Her son was confounded at the sudden change, and perhaps a little piqued at the indifference with which his own affair seemed to be regarded. "Don't for goodness sake offend those singing people," said this worldly lady. "There is no harm in a flirtation with the girl if you find amusement in it. But you must see that we ought not to offend these people. There are excellent reasons for it. You showed your good sense in not exhibiting yourself on the platform. There is no need to go so far as that." The young man was pleased that he was not "to have any bother" on this subject, and repaired with ardour to the feet of the enchanting Corinna, who had now restored him to favour.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 217. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER XXXVIII. STORM.

A FEW days later, mamma and I were talking in the drawing-room, when the door opened and papa came in, his umbrella in his hand and his hat on his head, looking as white as death. He stood for a time without speaking. We were both staring in his face, as dumb as he.

"Droquille's a villain!" he said, suddenly. "They have got that miserable old fool's money—every guinea. I told you how it would be, and now it has happened!"

"What has happened?" asked mamma, still gazing at him, with a look of terror. I was myself freezing with horror. I never saw despair so near the verge of madness in a human face before as in papa's.

"What? We're ruined! If there's fifty pounds in the bank it's all, and only that between us and nothing."

"My God!" exclaimed mamma, whiter than ever, and almost in a whisper.

"Your God! What are you talking about? It is you that have done it all—filling the house with priests and Jesuits. I knew how it would be, you fool!"

Papa was speaking with the sternness of actual fury.

"I'm not to blame; it is not my doing. Frank, for Heaven's sake don't speak so, you'll drive me mad. I don't know what they have done—I don't understand it!" cried mamma, and burst into a helpless flood of tears.

"You may as well stop that crying. You can do it in the streets by-and-bye. Understand it? By Heaven, you'll understand it well enough before long. I hope you may, as you deserve it!"

With those dreadful looks, and a voice hoarse with passion, poor papa strode out of the room, and we heard him shut the hall-door after him with a crash.

We were left with the vaguest ideas of the nature of our misfortune; his agitation was so great as to assure me that an alarming calamity had really befallen us.

Mamma cried on. She was frightened by his evident alarm, and outraged by his violence, so shocking in one usually so gay, gentle, and serene. She went up to her room to cry there, and to declare herself the most miserable of women.

Her maid gave her *sal volatile*, and I seeing no good or comfort in my presence, ran down to the drawing-room.

I had hardly got into the room, when whom should I see arriving at the door in a cab, with some papers in his hand, but Mr. Forrester, papa's principal attorney.

I knew papa was out; and I was so afraid of his attorney's going away without giving us any light on the subject of our alarms, that I ran down-stairs, and told the servant to show him into the dining-room, and on no account to let him go away. I went into the room myself, and there awaited him.

In came Mr. Forrester, and looked surprised at finding me only.

"Oh, Mr. Forrester!" I said, going quickly to him, and looking up in his eyes, "what is this about Lady Lorrimer, and, are we quite ruined?"

"Ruined?" he repeated. "Oh, dear, not at all," and he threw a cautionary glance toward the door, and lowered his voice a little. "Why should you be ruined? It's only a disappointment. It has been very artfully done, and I was only this moment at the Temple talking the will over with one of the best men at the Bar, to whom I'm to send a brief, though I can't

see, myself, any good that is likely to come of it. Everything has been done, you see, under the best possible advice, and all the statutes steered clear of. Her estates were all turned into money—that is, the reversions sold—two years ago. The whole thing is very nearly a quarter of a million, all in money, and the will declares no trust—a simple bequest. I haven't the slightest hope of any case on the ground of undue influence. I dare say she was, in the meaning of the law, a perfectly free agent; and if she was not, depend upon it we shall never find it out."

"But does it do us any particular injury?" I inquired, not understanding one sentence in three that he spoke.

"Why, no injury, except a disappointment. In the natural course of things all this, or the bulk of it, might very likely have come to you here. But only that. It now goes elsewhere; and I fear there is not the least chance of disturbing it."

"Then we are not ruined?" I repeated.

He looked at me, as if he were not quite sure of my meaning, and, with a smile, answered:

"You are not a bit worse off than you were a year ago. She might have left you money, but she could take nothing from you. You have property at Cardyllion, I think, a place called Malory, and more at Golden Friars, and other things beside. But your country solicitors would know all about those things."

And thus having in some measure reassured me, he took his leave, saying he would go to papa's clubs to look for him.

I ran up to mamma, more cheerful than when I had left her. She also was cheered by my report, and being comforted on the immediate subject of her alarm, she began to think that his excitement was due to some fresh disappointment in his electioneering projects, and her resentment at his ill-temper increased.

This was the evening of papa's political dinner-party. A gentleman's party strictly it was to be, and he did not choose to allow poor Aunt Lorrimer's death to prevent it. Perhaps he was sorry now that he had not postponed it; but it was too late to think of that.

We were very near the close of the session. The evenings were perceptibly shortening. I remember every particular connected with that evening and night, with a sharp precision.

Papa came in at dusk. He ran up-stairs, and before dressing he came into mamma's

bedroom, where I was sitting at her bedside. He looked tired and ill, but was tranquil comparatively now.

"Never mind, May," he said; "it will all come right, I dare say. I wish this dinner was not to be till to-morrow. They are talking of putting me up for Dawling. One way or other, we must not despair yet. I'll come up and see you when they go away. We are a small party—only nine, you know—and I don't think there are two among them who won't be of very real use to me. If I get in I don't despair. I have been very low before, two or three times, and we've got up again. I don't see why we shouldn't now, as we did before."

Judging by his looks, you would have said that papa had just got out of a sick-bed, pale, ill, haggard.

He looked at his watch; it was later than he thought, and he went away. We heard him ring for his man, and presently the double knocks began at the hall-door, and his party were arriving.

Mamma was not very well, and whenever she was, or fancied herself, ill, papa slept in another bedroom, adjoining hers, with a dressing-room off it.

Ours was a large house, handsomer than would naturally have fallen to our lot; it had belonged to my grandfather, Lord Chellwood, and when he built the new house in Blank-street he settled this upon his younger son.

Mamma and I had some dinner in her room, and some tea there also. She had got over her first alarm. Papa's second visit had been reassuring, and she took it very nearly for granted that, after some harassing delays, and possibly a good deal of worry, the danger, whatever it was, would subside, as similar dangers had subsided before, and things would run again in their accustomed channel.

It was a very animated party; we could hear the muffled sound of their talking and laughing from the drawing-room, where they were now taking their tea and coffee, and talking, as it seemed, nearly all together.

At length, however, the feast was ended, the guests departed, and papa, according to promise, came up-stairs, and, with hardly a knock at the door, came in.

Had he been drinking more than usual? I don't know. He was in high spirits. He was excited, and looked flushed, and talked incessantly, and laughed ever so much at what seemed to me very indifferent jokes.

I tried to edge in a question or two about the election matters, but he did not seem to mind, or even to hear what I said, but rattled and laughed on in the same breathless spirits.

"I'm going to bed now," he said, suddenly. "I have ever so much to do to-morrow, and I'm tired. I shall be glad when this thing is all ended."

Mamma called after him, "But you did not bid us good-night." The candle, however, vanished through the second bedroom into the dressing-room, and we heard him shut the door.

"He did not hear," said mamma; "his head is so full of his election. He seems very well. I suppose everything will be right, after all."

So mamma and I talked on for a little; but it was high time that she should settle to rest. I kissed her, and away I went to my own room.

There my maid, as she brushed my hair, told me all the rumours of the servants' hall and the housekeeper's room about papa's electioneering prospects; all promised great things, and, absurd as these visions were, there was something cheering in listening to them. It was past twelve by the time my maid left me.

Very shortly after I heard a step come to my door, and papa asked, "Can I come in, dear, to say a word?"

"Oh yes; certainly, papa," I answered, a little curious.

"I won't sit down," he said, looking round the room vaguely. He laid his candle on my table; he had a small box in his hand, in which mamma had told me he kept little lozenges of opium, his use of which had lately given her a great deal of secret uneasiness. "I have found it all out. It was that villain Droqville who did it all. He has brought us very low—broken my heart, my poor child!" He heaved a great sigh. "If that woman had never lived, if we had never heard of her, I should not have been so improvident. But that's all over. You must read your Bible, Ethel; it is a good book; there's something in it—something in it. That governess, Miss Grey, was a good woman. I say you are young; you're not spoiled yet. You must read a little bit every night, or I'll come and scold you. Do you mind? You look very well, Ethel. You must not let your spirits down—your courage. I wish it was morning. All in good time. Get to sleep, darling. Good-night, good-bye." He kissed me on the cheek and departed.

I was soon fast asleep. I think the occurrences of the earlier part of the day had made me nervous. I awoke with a start, and a vague consciousness of having been in the midst of an unpleasant dream. I thought I heard mamma call me. I jumped out of bed, threw my dressing-gown about me, and, with bare feet, walked along the lobby, now quite dark, toward mamma's door. When I got almost to it I suddenly recollected that I could not have heard mamma's voice in my room from hers. In total darkness, solitude, and silence, I experienced the sort of chill which accompanies the discovery of such an illusion. I was just turning about, to make a hasty retreat to my own room, when I did hear mamma's voice. I heard her call papa's name, and then there was a silence.

I changed my mind. I went on, and tapped at her door.

Rather nervously she asked, "Who's there?" And on hearing me answer, told me to come in.

There was only the night-light she usually had burning in her room. She was sitting up in her bed, and told me she had been startled by seeing papa looking in at the door (she nodded toward the one that opened to his bedroom). The night-light was placed on a little table close beside it.

"And oh! my dear Ethel, he looked so horribly ill I was frightened; I hardly knew him, and I called to him, but he only said, 'That's enough,' and drew back, and shut the door. He looked so ill, that I should have followed him in, but I found the door locked, and I heard him shut the door of his dressing-room; do you think he is ill?"

"Oh! no, mamma; if he had been ill he'd have told you so; I'm sure it was the miserable light in this room; everything looks so strange in it." And so with a few words more we bid good-night once again; and, having seen her reclining with her head on her pillow, I made my way back again to my own room.

I felt very uncomfortable; the few words mamma had said presented an image that somehow was mysterious and ill-omened. I held my door open and listened with my head stretched into the dark. Papa's dressing-room door was nearly opposite. I was reassured by hearing his step on the floor; then I heard something moved; I closed my own door once more, and got into bed.

The laws of acoustics are, I believe, well ascertained; and, of course, they never vary. But their action, I confess, has often puzzled me.

In the house where I now write, there are two rooms separated only by a narrow passage, in one of which, under a surgical operation, three dreadful shrieks were uttered, not one of which was, even faintly, heard in the other room, where two near and loving relations awaited the result in the silence and agony of suspense.

In the same way, but not so strikingly, because the interposing space is considerably greater, no sound was ever heard in mamma's room, from papa's dressing-room, when the doors were shut. But from my door, when the rest of the house was silent, you could very distinctly hear a heavy step or any other noise in that room.

My visit to mamma's room had, as nurses say, "put my sleep astray," and I lay awake until I began to despair of going to sleep again till morning. From my meditations in the dead silence, I was suddenly startled by a sound like the clapping of the dressing-room door with one violent clang.

I jumped up again; I thought I should hear papa's step running down the stairs; and all my wild misgivings returned. I put my head out at the door and listened. I heard no step; nothing stirring. Once more in my dressing-gown I stole out; his candle was still burning, for I saw a ray of light slanting toward the lobby floor from the keyhole of his room, with the motes quivering in it. It pointed like a wand to something white that lay upon the ground. I remembered that this was the open leaf of the old Bible—too much neglected book, alas! in our house—that had fallen from its little shelf on the lobby, and which I had been specially moved to replace as I passed it an hour or two before, seeing, in my superstitious mood, omens in all things. Hurried on, however, by mamma's voice calling me, I had not carried out my intention.

"Dislodged from your place, you may be," I now thought as I stooped to take the book in my hand; "but never to be trampled on!"

I was interrupted by a voice, a groan, I thought, from inside the dressing-room.

I was not quite certain; staring breathlessly at the door, I listened; no sound followed. I stepped to the door and knocked. No answer came. With my lips close to the door, and my hand upon the handle I called, "Papa, papa, papa!" I was frightened, I pushed open the door, and hesitated. I called again, "Papa—answer, answer; are you there, papa?" I was calling upon silence. With a little effort I stepped in.

The candle was burning on the table; there was a film of blue smoke hovering in the air; a faint smell of burning. I saw papa lying on the floor; he seemed to have dropped from the arm-chair, and to have fallen over on his back; a pistol lay by his half-open hand; the side of his face looked black and torn as if a thunderbolt had scorched him, and a stream of blood seemed throbbing from his ear.

The smell of powder, the smoke, the pistol on the ground, told what had happened. Freezing with terror, I screamed the words, "Papa, papa; oh! God! speak. He's killed!" I was on my knees beside him; he was not quite dead. His eyes were fixed in the earnest stare of the last look, and there was a faint movement of the mouth as if he were trying to speak. It was only for a few seconds. Then all motion ceased; his jaw fell; he was dead.

I staggered back against the wall, uttering a frightful scream.

Under excitement so tremendous as mine, people, I think, are more than half spiritualised. We seem to find ourselves translated from place to place by thought rather than effort.

It seemed to me only a second after I had left that frightful room, that I stood beside Miss Pouden's bed up-stairs. She slept with not only her shutters, but the window open. It was so perfectly silent, the street as well as the house, that through the wall from the nursery next door, I could faintly hear a little baby crying. The moonlight shone dazzlingly on the white curtains of Miss Pouden's bed. I shook her by the shoulder, and called her; she started up, and I remember the odd effect of her wide open eyes, lighted by the white reflection, and staring from the shadow at me with a horror that she caught from my looks.

"Merciful heaven! Miss Ware—my dear child—why are you here? What is it?"

"Come with me; we must get help; papa is dreadfully hurt, in the dressing-room; mamma knows nothing of it; don't say a word as you pass her door."

Together we went down; steadily drawing toward the awful room, from which we saw, at the end of the dark passage, the faint flush of the candle fall on the carpet.

When I told Miss Pouden what had happened, nothing would induce her to come with me beyond the lobby. I had to go into the room alone; I had to look in to be sure that he was actually dead. Oh!

it was appalling, incredible. I, Ethel Ware, looking at my handsome, gay, good-natured father, killed by his own hands, the smoke of the fatal shot not yet quite cleared away! Why was there no pitying angel near to call me but a minute earlier? My tap at the door would have arrested his hand, and the moment of temptation would have passed harmlessly by. All too late; for time and eternity all is irretrievable now. One glance was sufficient. I could not breathe; I could not, for some dreadful moments, withdraw my eyes. With a faint cry, I stepped backward. I was trembling violently as I asked Miss Pouden to send any one of the servants for Sir Jacob Lake, and to tell whoever was going not to leave his house without him.

I waited in the drawing-room while she went down, and I heard her call to the servants over the stairs. The message was soon arranged, and the messenger gone. I had not cried all this time; I continued walking quickly about the drawing-room with my hands clenched together, talking wildly to myself, and to God.

When Miss Pouden returned, I implored of her not to leave me.

"Come up to my room; we'll wait there till Sir Jacob Lake comes. Mamma must not know it; except as he advises. If she learned it too suddenly, she would lose her mind."

BORGIA IN THE KITCHEN.

PROFESSORS of optimism to the contrary notwithstanding—there are some serious disadvantages in living in this severely practical age. Every day some sweet and time-honoured tradition either shrivels into dry prose before the cold blast of criticism, or is cast off bodily like a serpent's skin, that some new and unwholesome truth may wriggle into scaly life. The "tale of Troy divine," in spite of Homer, is very decidedly under a cloud. Romulus and Remus, the she-wolf foster-mother, Tarquin, Lucretia, and early Roman history generally, came to grief several years ago. Alfred the Great as a baker of cakes is—to the despair of the British artist—fallen into discredit; the beautiful story of Eleanor sucking the poison from her husband's wound has been demolished by some disbeliever in feminine devotion; Robin Hood has had his bull's-eye put out; Little John is clean gone, quarter-staff and all; Friar Tuck is very naught. Even the beaver of Gessler

has been knocked into a "shocking bad hat," and the old established firm of W. Tell and Son has at last gone into the Gazette, and the whole of the stories of Tell and the apple have been "boiled down" into some Aryan myth about the Sun-god, difficult to understand, and uninteresting when understood. It is fortunate, however, that the old house lasted Schiller's and Rossini's time, or the world of art might have lost two of its most splendid monuments. Nursery tales have been treated as roughly as folk-lore. Jack in the Beanstalk has been shown up as a ruthless adventurer, and Bluebeard's blue room has been ascribed to the invention of his wife's family, who wanted some excuse for knocking the unfortunate and much-married gentleman on the head. The terror of Miss Muffet on the appearance of the spider has been treated with derision, and persons of an inquiring turn of mind ask to be informed what a "tuffet" may be? Little Jack Horner has been terribly mauled. Professor Windbeutel declares that the whole narrative is hopelessly confused, and that the character of Horner sets analysis at defiance. "How," asks Windbeutel, "do you reconcile these contradictions? Horner exults in his personal courage when he has only just given a never-to-be-forgotten proof of cowardice by slinking into the corner to consume his pie. Moreover, by his pulling out a plum, it could not have been a pie at all, but was most probably a Christmas pudding." Beauty and the Beast have also suffered at the hands of Windbeutel, who insists that the whole story is an allegory upside down, as it is absurd to suppose that princes, or indeed any men, show their rough side during courtship, much preferring to defer such exhibition to the post-matrimonial period. Animals have been ill-treated in like manner, and our old friend the sea-serpent cannot succeed in inspiring confidence. Natural history has shown the tiger to be wholly brave, and the king of beasts, the lordly lion, an arrant coward, and now chemistry steps in to abolish the harmless necessary cat. Whittington and the Marquis de Carabas will avail but little, for I fear it is all over with poor Pussy. She is no longer necessary, and her pretty purrings and little coaxing ways will stand her in but little stead now that she is no longer wanted as a destroyer of rats and mice. For long ages Pussy's little oddities and petty purloinings of all sorts of things—from coals to raspberry

jam—have been condoned on the ground that she did less mischief than would rats and mice when left in undisturbed possession of the house. Her peculiar ways, and a certain untamable quality inherent in her have been endured, for she was “an excellent mouser.” Her midnight serenades have been patiently undergone on the ground that a feline serenade is a lesser nuisance than an army of rats skirmishing about the floor: and even her almost political adherence to place rather than to person, has been excused for the reason that no consideration was sufficiently powerful to wean her from her favourite hunting-grounds. But the doom of Pussy is sealed. She is not to be supplanted by the ichneumon, nor even by tame snakes, but by a more potent and insidious rival. The chemist is abroad, and the sneaking practice of poisoning those rodents, who are so unfortunate as to rank as vermin, is openly advocated.

Crude efforts have for many years past been made in this direction. Ingenious but depraved people have been in the habit of mixing meal with plaster of Paris, placing the abominable compound in the rats’ runs, and treacherously putting water near it, in order that the unfortunate animals, already suffering from the pangs of thirst, might assuage their tortures by imbibing the fatal fluid, and thereby form small plaster images in their unfortunate stomachs. But this mean style of assassination met with its just reward. The rats crawled into their holes, or sank down behind the wainscoting, and horrible odours soon drove the shabby assassin either to the whips of the house-agent or the scorpions of the carpenter. I have no sympathy with Borgia, as I have no very great personal objection to the cheerful and frisky rat, for

The lively rodent never injured me.

Occupying, some years ago, a suite of rooms in University-place, New York City, I was much diverted by the antics of the rats, who were constantly skirmishing about my sleeping-rooms. I could not avoid fancying that they had done me the honour to select my rooms as a convenient spot for holding athletic meetings and other events of a like sporting character. They got up flat races in my sitting-room—three times round the hearth-rug and a distance—and entered themselves for steeplechases among the fire-irons, thereby, as my landlady remarked, raising Cain. The noise

became at last intolerable, and in a fit of fury, very unusual in one of my eminently pacific disposition, I proposed to the landlady aforesaid—a gorgeous lady in velvet and diamonds, privately married to a six-foot policeman—to pass my leisure evenings in picking off the rats with my revolver. But my landlady pleaded her carpet, and other “fixings,” and my truculent fit having worn itself out, I was fain to subside into calm acquiescence with the riotous proceedings of my four-footed neighbours. By degrees I became weak enough to leave odds and ends of biscuit on the table, and on moonlit nights it was pretty to see my little protégés clambering up the table-cloth at racing pace, and most amusing to witness the scimmages that took place anent the equitable division of the booty. A heartless friend recommended me to keep a cat; but I know Pussy. She is always wanting to get into bed if at home on cold nights, and on fine evenings has too many calls to make on her friends and acquaintances. In the matter of cats I—like Handel in the matter of wine—like other people’s, and, having to choose between rats and cats, I preferred the rats.

My kindly feelings towards the rodent family being borne in mind, my horror may be imagined at beholding, a few days since, the advertisement of a so-called vermin killer, having for its trade mark one of the most heartless cartoons that it has ever been my ill-fortune to behold.

In the foreground was depicted an unfortunate mouse laid out cold and stiff, while another poor innocent in the rear was apparently describing a back summersault as a preliminary to his dissolution; to add to the horror of the scene, two rats were discovered apparently discussing the catastrophe with gloomy faces, and hesitating as to the advisability of partaking of refreshment under such suspicious circumstances. Stung by curiosity, I invested threepence in a packet of the vermin killer, and having carefully disposed of a hideous grey powder contained therein, proceeded to study the printed directions, evidently compiled by some wily wretch, whose hatred of the rodentia was only equalled by his ignorance of the English language. Purchasers are requested to “sprinkle a little of the killer on a piece of bread well buttered” (observe the diabolical insidiousness of this procedure), “pass a knife over the surface so as to mix the killer well with the butter on the bread, particularly round the edges” (note the treachery of this).

"lay the pieces of bread-and-butter in the places most frequented by the mice at night, and in the morning they will be usually found attracted to the killer as by magic, and be found dead near it."

Not satisfied with murder on a small scale, our Brinvilliers next proceeds to wholesale slaughter.

"To destroy mice in stacks: Mix a shilling packet" (mark the commercial element here) "of the killer, which will usually be sufficient for a fair-sized stack, for one dressing, with about two ounces of nice sweet lard" (Aha! Judas) "carefully mixed on the back of a plate with a clean knife, then put bits of this, the size of a small bean, into pieces of clean white paper, about the size of the one on which this direction is printed; twist the four corners together to avoid wasting the killer" (economical Tofana!); "let these bits of paper be thrust into the runs," &c.

It would seem that Borgia has an easy time of it with the poor little mice, who throw back summersaults, and die on the spot; but he finds the rat a more difficult prey, and is compelled to approach that astute animal by regular parallels, and to pay him all the honour of a siege in due form. We are told in a sentence, sublimely indifferent to Lindley Murray, that "Rats are more cautious than mice what they eat, and must be tempted two or three nights with what it is intended to mix the killer."

The wily rat must be tempted, and Borgia proceeds to develop his scheme of assassination.

"If oatmeal is used, place near their runs for two or three nights a little fine Scotch oatmeal tied in white paper; if they take this, then mix a shilling packet of the killer with two ounces of the oatmeal."

It would seem that rats are particularly apt to smell one of their own race, for they do not always gobble the carefully prepared bait. In this case, we are told to keep on—of course buying shilling packets of the killer all the time—and try "fish, liver, or raw meat as a bait, cut very small, nearly minced; as soon as they are found to eat the bait, mix a little of the killer with what they are found to eat best." I am glad to find that the rat is no easy victim. In spite of treacherous and systematic attempts to lull him into a sense of fancied security, he often detects the lurking poison, and declines the cruel kindness of the killer. Moreover—for murder will out—we are informed that "Rats usually die in their holes," and thus avenge themselves

on their sneaking enemies by poisoning the atmosphere of the abode of Borgia.

It is comforting, from my point of view, to find that, even from a commercial point of view, Borgia is far from having it all his own way. There are "bogus" Borgias in the field who imitate his powder, his cartoon, and his printed directions, grammar and all. Bogus Borgia recommends fish as the best medium for insinuating his abominable powder; but in other particulars is a mere slavish imitator of the original poisoner. The same treacherous method of gradual temptation is recommended by the younger, as by the elder criminal, the same cold-blooded satisfaction is shown at the sudden death of the harmless mouse, and the same difficulties are confessed to exist in the case of the subtle rat. Melancholy, indeed (again from the point of view of a friend to rats), are the mean attempts of these assassins, who not alone have ruined a highly important outlet for human ingenuity—the invention of mouse-traps—but have reduced poor Pussy to the humiliating confession that her "occupation's gone."

THE FORMS OF WATER.

MIST AND RAIN.

WITHOUT air to breathe when brought into the world, we could only continue to live a few seconds; but without water, we could not even come to life; we could not be organised, nor grow up to the point at which breathing becomes necessity. Water we are, and to water we return, quite as much as dust we are, and to dust return. Water is, therefore, even a more primary and indispensable element of our existence than air, if it were possible to make a comparison between two absolute indispensabilities.

We know air in one form only. It is more or less dense or rare; more or less devoid of colour, according to its slight or considerable depth; more or less laden with foreign substances, as smoke, dust, invisible vapour, visible fogs; more or less perceptible to our senses, through its variations of heat or cold, unfelt calm, or destructive and irresistible motion. But it is always the same light, transparent, elastic fluid, and it defies us to change it into anything else. If we decompose air into the elements of which it is a mixture, they still remain, like itself, aëriiform, gaseous, or air-like.

Water, on the contrary (besides being

compounded of elements which, unlike itself, are never either liquid or solid), puts on more dissimilar shapes than were ever attributed to the fabled Proteus. A fall in temperature of only half a degree will change the yielding liquid into a rigid solid. Nor are its diverse forms cosmopolitan in their assumption and appearance. Not everybody has the privilege of beholding them.

Millions of our fellow-creatures live and die without ever having seen hail, snow, or ice. Millions more never gaze on a glacier during their whole allowance of three score years and ten. If, by good luck, they catch sight of one, it impresses them with a new sensation, and, if they be not "duller than the fat weed that roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf," inspires them with new ideas.

There are whole tribes and nations of men to whom the ocean is a thing unknown. Dwellers on extensive alluvial plains have to take their notions of a waterfall from a lock or a mill weir. The great American fresh-water lakes—their aspect, phenomena, fish, and birds—are separated from us by a hemisphere.

There are regions where the form which water takes when we witness its balloon performances, in the shape of a passing cloud, is a marvel and a rarity. One of Captain Marryat's sailors joyously hails the black squall he meets in the Channel because it is "no more of your d——d blue skies." Rain is most partially and unequally distributed. There is a spot near Bangor, in Wales, where it rains more or less every day in the year. Another, in Borrowdale, competes with its rainfall. At Perpignan, chief town of the Oriental Pyrenees, France, it rains so seldom that when the phenomenon does occur little boys and girls call each other out to see it, and catch the drops on their inquisitive tongues.

In the Pampas there occur long droughts which, Mr. Darwin was told, are almost periodical, the interval being about fifteen years. Note here that Mr. G. J. Symons calls attention to the periodicity of wet seasons in the United Kingdom. A few years since any one who expressed belief in the periodicity of meteorological phenomena received more criticism than credit. Not being much afraid of satire, in 1865 he pointed out the fact that, of the fifty years between 1815 and 1864 the wettest were '36, '41, '48, '52, and '60, and that, out of these, three were equidistant, giving what looked like a twelve-year period. Now

that such speculations are more favourably received, it may be permissible to state that '72 is just twelve years after '60, and that while this is written it is raining steadily, with plenty of inundations in plenty of quarters.

In contrast with this, during the "gran seco" in the Pampas, between the years 1827 and '30, the vegetation, even to the thistles, failed. The brooks were dried up, all the small rivers became highly saline, causing the death of vast numbers of animals. The whole country assumed the appearance of a dusty high road. In fact, such quantities of dust were blown about that, in that open country, the landmarks became obliterated, and people could not tell the limits of their estates. Disputes arose in consequence. Multitudes of birds and wild and domestic animals perished for want of food and water. The deer came into a court-yard to a well which a man had been obliged to dig to supply his own family with water.

More than this, there are localities, as in the Great Desert, where it never rains at all; also within the Arctic and Antarctic Circles, where the deposition of water on the earth occurs only in the shape of snow (and that the very finest) and frozen vapour, or minute particles of ice floating in the air. Neither does it hail there, hail being frozen rain.

Water has even an invisible state, in which it increases the clearness of the atmosphere. Amongst the traditional signs of rain are:

Along the stream the swallows fly,
The distant hills are looking nigh.

There is no better example of invisible water than that given by Doctor Tyndall. At every puff of a railway locomotive, a cloud is projected into the air. Watch it sharply: you notice that it first forms at a little distance from the top of the funnel. Give close attention, and you will sometimes see a perfectly clear space between the funnel and the cloud. Through that clear space the thing which makes the cloud must pass. What, then, is this thing which at one moment is transparent and invisible, and at the next moment visible as a dense opaque cloud? It is the steam or vapour of water from the boiler. Every bit of steam shrinks, when chilled, to a much more minute particle of water. The liquid particles thus produced form a kind of water-dust of exceeding fineness, which floats in the air, and is called a cloud.

And not only is it called, but it is a

cloud. On a chain of mountains you often see a bit of cloud fastened, like a flag, to the summit of every peak, while the intervals between them remain perfectly clear. The fact is so familiar as to have given rise to popular names. The Wrekin has his nightcap, the Table Mountain his table-cloth. Doctor Tyndall figures and describes the cloud-banner of the Aiguille du Dru. I have seen a cloud-flag hang to Mont Ventoux for hours and days together, apparently unaltered and unmoved. But its fixity is only apparent. When the streamer of cloud drawn out from an Alpine peak is many hundred yards in length, we wonder at its obstinate persistence in spite of a high wind which may be blowing all the while. But in reality its substance is ever changing. The invisible vapour, forced up the mountain side, is chilled and condensed into fog at the top. The banner, which is incessantly dissolved at the further end, is incessantly renewed at its points of contact with the peak. In consequence of this equalisation of consumption and supply, the cloud appears as changeless as the mountain to which it clings. "When the red evening sun," writes Doctor Tyndall, "shines upon these cloud-streamers, they resemble vast torches with their flames blown through the air."

Air, at a certain temperature, can hold only a certain quantity of invisible watery vapour. That is, the quantity of moisture contained by air when saturated with it, is constant and fixed for every degree of temperature. The drier the air, and the hotter the air, the greater is the amount of cloud which can thus be dissolved in it. Consequently, the invisible water-vapour in air becomes visible when a lowering of temperature, or an increase of moisture, brings it to the point of saturation. What we call a cloud, therefore, is water-vapour which the air cannot absorb when it is saturated, and which differs from the vapour already absorbed by passing into the state which Doctor Tyndall calls water-dust, consisting, according to recent investigations, of minute vesicles or bladders. By watching a small cloud which hangs low in the air, we may often make a good guess at the weather. If it grows smaller, melts away, and is dissolved in the air, we may expect a dry day, or at least a few dry hours. If it grows heavier, and amplifies its proportions, we may take our umbrella under our arm, with the likelihood of having to hold it overhead.

This change of water from the gaseous to the molecular state, can take place at any altitude. When it occurs at the ground level, we call it fog; but there is no essential difference between a cloud and a fog. While traversing clouds in a balloon, no resistance is felt; the air is simply more or less opaque, chilly, and moist, exactly as happens on the ground, according to the nature of the fog or mist. The same with clouds encountered on mountains. But although there is no essential difference between clouds and fogs, there really is one of fact or circumstance. A fog is the produce of a place or locality in which water-vapour passes from the invisible to the visible state; a cloud is a free individual object, an unattached grouping of vapours into forms so determinate that clouds are classified according to their shapes. The one is fixed, local, and uniform, the other is movable, and of variable aspect.

Examined with a magnifying glass, fog is composed of tiny bodies which are found to consist of water obeying the laws of universal gravitation. The water-molecules are little balls, like shot or melted lead fallen from a height, or mercury spilt on a mahogany table. Whether those spherules are hollow or not is a question on which meteorologists are not agreed. Halley, with apparent reason, maintained that they are. The deadening of sound by fog confirms the idea. Gas bubbles in water have the same effect. Probably, in mists, the vesicles are mingled with a considerable quantity of minute droplets of water.

Take a cup full of any dark-coloured liquid, as, for example, coffee. Heat it, and set it in the sunshine. If the air is calm a vapour rises and soon disappears. With a magnifying lens globules are seen to rise. The smallest rapidly cross the field of the lens; the others fall back on the surface of the liquid. De Saussure declares that the little vesicles which mount are so completely different from those which fall back again that it is impossible to doubt that the former are hollow.

Their behaviour with light confirms the opinion. Everybody has remarked the iridescent hues that gleam on the surface of soap bubbles. In order that those colours should appear, it is optically necessary that the film containing the bubble of air should be excessively thin. Kratzenstein examined with a magnifying glass, in sunshine, the vesicles that steamed up from

the surface of hot water, and saw on their surface coloured rings exactly like those on soap bubbles; and not only was he convinced respecting their structure, but he was able to calculate the thickness of their envelope.

De Saussure and Kratzenstein tried to measure with the microscope the diameter of the vesicles composing visible water-vapour; but hot-water steam can hardly be expected to give the same results as natural fog. Kaemtz made numerous measurements on mists in Central Germany and Switzerland. He found that in winter, when the air is very moist, the diameter of the vesicles is twice as great as in summer, when the air is dry. But in the course of the same month the diameter varies. The average diameter of mist vesicles may be taken at one-fiftieth part of a millimetre. The length of the millimetre is three hundredth parts of an English inch. Their minimum diameter occurs in very fine weather; when rain threatens, it increases; and immediately before a downfall it is very unequal in the same cloud, probably in consequence of the mixture of hollow vesicles with full droplets.

When we behold a cloud resolve itself into rain and pour out thousands of gallons of water, we marvel that such an enormous weight of fluid should be capable of suspension in the atmosphere. The cause consists simply in its extreme divisibility. The fiftieth part of three hundredth parts of an English inch is smallness beyond our clear conception; and this is not the minimum, but the average size of the particles of water-dust. Currents of warm air ascending from the earth's surface are quite sufficient to keep such tiny atoms afloat. They hang together in groups and masses in consequence of their mutual attraction; for attractive influences are the only obvious explanation of the very distinct forms and clearly defined outlines which clouds exhibit.

Thick fogs are sometimes odorous, by impregnation with diverse exhalations pervading the lower strata of the atmosphere. In Belgium and the north of Europe, they not unfrequently smell of turf. In Paris, during the chilly fogs of October, 1871, especially in the evening of the 14th, a most disagreeable taint of petroleum was painfully perceptible.

The forms of clouds are infinitely diversified, from the flat thick mist which carpets the meadow to the bright white flakes which hover in the heights of the firma-

ment. The convenience of some sort of classification, for literary and scientific purposes, led the meteorologist Howard to give names to the principal types, which have been generally adopted. Our commonest fair-weather cloud is the cumulus, accumulated masses of white vapour, Ossa piled on Pelion, Mont Blanc on the top of Chimborazo, sometimes with cauliflower heads, called by French sailors "bales of cotton," with a horizontal and level base. Cumuli are par excellence the clouds which afford free scope to the imagination. They offer promontories on which angels might alight; they are snowy Alps, dolomite mountain ranges, concentrated glaciers, wintry pine forests, dragons, camels, flying chariots with demons hidden within. Ossian owes something to the cumulus cloud; which also varies into the cumulo-stratus, a hybrid between the pure vapour alp and the stratus proper, the long, horizontal, parallel banks of mist stretching across the sky, and doubtless the self-same famous cloud that was once thought "very like a whale."

The cloud which gives long-continued rain, the nimbus, which, in fact, is the fountain and source of wet seasons, covers the whole sky with an enormous dull-grey winding sheet. Its slightly undulated lower surface gives out an incessant showery drip; its heaving and irregular upper surface is invisible except to balloonists who have emerged aloft after passing through its thousands of feet of thickness. When it comes creeping over the firmament, adieu to all hope of the afternoon walk. Picnics may be put off till that day week, and smart clothing consigned to the wardrobe. The nimbus is the world's wet blanket.

All clouds are formed of watery vesicles more or less small, and more or less crowded. But clouds are not confined to the atmospheric regions, whose temperature is above the freezing point. They also float in glacial altitudes where the vesicular water is congealed into minute filaments of ice. Such clouds, composed of ice or snow, give rise to the optical phenomena of halos, parahelia, and the like. Their height above the earth is very considerable. When a balloon has reached its greatest elevation, it does not seem even to approach those clouds, whilst a moderate ascent carries the aëronaut far above the cumulus and its fellow children of the mist. Mr. Glaisher, at an elevation of some forty thousand feet, saw them hanging, inapproachable, over-

head. Such a cloud is called a cirrus, a curl, a lock of frizzled hair, which approximately describes its shape. Country people know them as "mares' tails." By combination or transition, they form the cirro-cumulus and the cirro-stratus. But in fact all the varieties of cloud may be separated into two grand categories: the cumulus, formed of liquid vesicles, and the cirrus, consisting of frozen particles.

When a cloud is about to resolve itself into rain, it acquires increased density, grows darker, and (except in the case of hail or a squall) spreads over an extensive area. The water detached from it would fall vertically, if the atmosphere were calm and the drops sufficiently heavy; but two causes, the wind and the lightness of the new-born drops, make them fall obliquely as a sort of train hanging from the cloud, which sails in advance. The production of rain mostly occurs when one layer of cloud overlies another; and it is the upper cloud which determines the precipitation of water from the lower one. Numerous observers have remarked that when two masses of air, saturated or nearly so with moisture, but of different temperatures, meet, a downfall of rain is the consequence. Nor is there any limit to the rainfall, so long as a current of cold cloud from one direction, say north-east, passes over another current of warm saturated cloud arriving continuously from an opposite direction, say south-west.

The formation of rain from impalpable molecules, the moderate altitude at which it takes shape and consistency, the gradual increase of its volume as it descends, and consequently the slight force, and the inconsiderable masses, with which it strikes the surface of the earth, are so many proofs of the wise arrangements with which a benevolent Providence has surrounded us "in this wonderful system of things that we call Nature." Rains, even when excessive and long-continued, do little injury to the face of a land, while they fill reservoirs, natural and artificial, sweeten and soften the atmosphere, thoroughly cleanse and sweep away impurities from large assemblages of human dwellings, consolidate and fill up swamps, and gradually raise lowlands to a higher level. Inundations even are not unmixed evils, as the valley of the lower Nile can testify.

What if it had been otherwise! If rain came bodily from the upper regions, to dash on the ground with accelerated velocity, or in sheets, if only one or two inches thick, or in masses, cataracts, or water-spouts!

All these cases we can easily imagine, and shudder at the catastrophes they would inevitably produce. We can fancy them the more readily because there occur occasional deviations from the normal order of things, sufficient to make us thankful that they should be the exception and not the rule.

Rain is of necessity the primeval form of actual water. In its liquid state water probably first appeared on earth, in the midst of incessant explosions and long-rolling thunder, as rain, perhaps scalding hot, whether condensed from steam or the result of the combination of its constituent gases, to be immediately repelled, in the shape of vapour, from the heated surface of such ground as there was then. We have the prints of early rain-drops petrified in sandstone, but they could not have been the earliest, or anything like it, because sand is a product of the mechanical action of waves or water-courses. At first rivers could not be. The rains that fell would be re-evaporated before they could combine into a stream of any size.

Not only is rain unequally distributed, but the inequality varies on the very same spot; that is, climates change. The amount of vapour condensed into rain or snow is liable to increase or diminution. When Doctor Tyndall visited the Mer de Glace last June, after an absence of twelve years, it exhibited in a striking degree that excess of consumption over supply which, if continued, will eventually reduce the Swiss glaciers to the mere spectres of their former selves. When he first saw the Mer de Glace, its ice-cliffs towered over Les Mottets, and an arm of the Arveiron, issuing from the cliffs, plunged as a powerful cascade down the rocks. The ice has now shrunk far behind them. The ice-vault of the Arveiron has dwindled considerably. The ice-cascade of the Géant has suffered much from the general waste. Its crevasses are still wild, but the ice-cliffs and séracs of former days are to-day but poorly represented. The great Aletsch and its neighbours exhibit similar evidences of diminution.

In the north of Chilo, we learn from Mr. Darwin, old and deserted houses are numerous. Traces of Indian habitations have been discovered in many parts where the land is now unfit for any kind of cultivation. On the Andes there are many buildings at heights so great as almost to border on the perpetual snow, where the land produces absolutely nothing, and, what is still more extraordinary, where

there is no water. Nevertheless, from the appearance of the houses, the Indians must have used them as their places of residence. Some supply of water near them must, therefore, formerly have existed. If at the present time two or three showers of rain were to fall annually, instead of one, as now is the case, during two or three years, a small rill of water would probably be formed in that great valley. And then, by irrigation (which was formerly so well understood by the Indians), the soil would easily be rendered sufficiently productive to support a few families.

It is some comfort, after the recent long-continued spell of wet, to know from this instance that an excessive rainfall is less incompatible with human welfare than excessive drought.

HOME.

WHEN daily tasks are done, and tired hands
Lie still and folded on the resting knee,
When loving thoughts have leave to loose their bands,
And wander over past and future free;
When visions bright of love and hope fulfilled,
Bring weary eyes a spark of olden fire;
One castle fairer than the rest we build,
One blessing more than others we desire;
A home, our home, wherein all waiting past,
We two may stand together, and alone;
Our patient taskwork finished, and at last
Love's perfect blessedness and peace our own.
Some little nest of safety and delight,
Guarded by God's good angels day and night.

We cannot guess if this dear home shall lie
In some green spot embowered with arching trees,
Where bird-notes joined with brook-notes gliding by,
Shall make us music as we sit at ease.
Or if amid the city's busy din
Is built the nest for which we look and long,
No sound without shall mar the peace within,
The calm of love that time has proved so strong.
Or if, ah! solemn thought, this home of ours
Doth lie beyond the world's confusing noise;
And if the nest be built in Eden bowers,
What do we still, but silently rejoice?
We have a home, but of its happy state
We know not yet. We are content to wait.

DAME CUMBERBACH AND THE LITTLE MARKET-GARDENERS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

LITTLE Katty was a waif upon London streets, belonging to nobody, yet somehow getting more care bestowed on her than often falls to the lot of the children of the poor. Her mother had lived in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden Market, and when she died the market-women could not find it in their hearts to send the child to the workhouse. One kept her a week and another a fortnight, one bought her a frock and another a pair of shoes, and when she grew older they set her up in business.

When they came in early with their baskets from the country, or filled them out of the gardeners' carts, they would each save a little something for Katty out of their stores; a clump of fresh primulas or a root of musk, a rose for a gentleman's button-hole, or a handful of herbs. Katty would hover about the crossings or pose herself against a lamp-post, and would be sure to have earned her supper when the day was done. At the age of fifteen she was a thrifty woman of business, with peachy cheeks and laughing eyes, and a sweet and merry voice which made the people stay to buy. None other could make such a picture with an armful of fresh roses, or a basket of white lilies, or a heap of glowing tulips perched on the shoulder. People would turn their heads for a glimpse of the roguish face which looked out on them through a moving bush of bloom. She seemed unprotected, yet had a friend in every street, from the asthmatic old umbrella-mender down to the whole regiment of youthful shoe-blacks.

The person who loved Katty best in the world was Dan, the market-gardener's lad from Applethorpe; a strong active youth with reddish hair and a pair of tender grey eyes that might have belonged to any woman. His voice had a cheery ring, perhaps from his keeping company with the larks, and he smiled as if accustomed to have the sun on his face. His breath, like the country air, had a puff of strength in it, and the stamp of his foot on the London pavement had the honest clink of a spade in the furrow. His father had been a market-gardener. When he died his gardens had passed into other hands, and his widow had almost worn her eyes blind with sewing, to keep herself and son out of the grave or the workhouse. Now her son was nearly a man, and could get a man's full wages for his work. He worked in the very gardens which his father had owned for years, and had a gallant hope of some day winning them back.

One summer morning Dan was rumbling along the road from Applethorpe in his gardener's cart, on his master's business to Covent Garden Market. All the way as he went he left a track of fragrance on the twilight air of the dawn. Round about his knees were packed heaps of mint and sweet marjoram, sheaves of spicy lavender, and bundles of pungent thyme. In front of his cart stood a row of budding and blooming rose-trees, and baskets of late strawberries nestled between fresh lettuces

and peas. As he drove past the sleeping farm-houses the cocks crowed, and a crimson light crept out from under the edges of the sky behind the trees, and made all the fields blush and the cottage windows twinkle. The sun was blazing brightly when he arrived at the market; and there was Katty waiting for him, in her fresh cotton gown, with her coarse yellow bonnet tipped over her eyes.

"Oh, Dan! oh, Katty!" A little brown hand was squeezed by a big red one; and the little girl made herself busy, picking and choosing out of the cartful of country sweets.

"I have two bits of extra business with you to-day, Katty," said Dan, "so you might first sit down on these cauliflowers, and let's have it out at once!"

"Goodness!" cried Katty, mischievously, "to think of Dan having more in his mind besides the cabbages!"

"You won't laugh when I tell you about my first piece of business," said Dan. "It's about that poor Mrs. Huckleberry who lives under the hedge of our pea-field. One of her children is sick, and they're nearer starving than ever; and she a lady with rich friends all the time. Last night she came to me and her face was white, and 'Oh, Dan!' said she, 'will you take this to London with you, and see if it mightn't be sold? I've worked at it night and day,' she said, 'and it's a thing that ladies wear. It ought to fetch two or three guineas; and maybe Jacky needn't die.'"

"Oh, dear!" cried Katty, piteously, and opened Mrs. Huckleberry's parcel.

"It's very lovely lace, Dan; but you don't expect me to buy it. I'm afraid my basket would tear it, for it's to be worn on a lady's shoulders."

"I knew you'd have your joke at it," laughed Dan; "but you'll manage the matter somehow."

Katty spread the thing on her lap, a lace pelerine of most delicate pattern, and presently clapped her hands, crying, "I'll sell it this day to Lady Cumberbach!"

A great lumbering carriage came along the pavement at this moment and stopped among the baskets, the empty hampers, and the flower-pots. Everybody stared at it, for gentlefolks do not make their purchases at six o'clock in the morning; and one bystander said to another, "It is that mad Dame Cumberbach!"

"No sooner said than done!" cried Katty, "for here is the old lady herself!"

Lady Cumberbach was sitting up between

the windows of her coach like a mummy in a glass case, her face like a mask of parchment shrivelled up into a thousand wrinkles, a patch of rouge on either cheek, and a bunch of silvered curls hanging over her witch-like eyes. Up to her peaked chin she was wrapped in furs, though the month was July. In an instant her head was thrust out of the window.

"Little Katty, come here! I will not be kept waiting on that great lout from the country. What have you got to show me? A rose-tree with a hundred blossoms? A lily ten feet high? I'm dying for something new. I'm tired of everything!"

"I know!" cried Katty, and plunged among the flower-pots, seized on a prickly shrub, and began plaiting Dan's lace into a lily before his eyes, pinched it and puckered it, and finally fixed it as a monster blossom on a branch of the shrub; then was on the carriage-step in a twinkling.

"Eh, what!" cried the old lady. "Good heavens! where are my spectacles? You don't mean to say it is really a new flower!"

"Only five guineas!" said Katty. "A flower at this moment, and something else when you will." And she plucked the supposed blossom and flung the lace across the old woman's knees.

"Ah, you clever monkey, you will certainly keep me alive these many years with your tricks. This lace is really charming. Here are your five guineas, child, and I hope you did not steal the thing. And now some flowers, quick! I'm longing for something fresh from the country!"

Katty did not need to be bidden twice; sped back to Dan and dropped the guineas into his hand, and flashed back to the carriage with her arms full of the sweetest the cart had brought. They were packed round the weird old lady till she looked like the bad fairy in the garden of the princess, snuffing their sweet perfume, and pressing their shrinking blossoms to her poor old cheeks. Even this was not enough, for she caught Katty by the hand, and pulled her into the carriage.

"Sit here beside me," she said. "There is plenty of room left, and you must drive round the Park with me, and come home to breakfast. I tell you, child, I will have you, so you need not pull away. Your merry voice is life to me—and I'm dying for something fresh. I can't sleep at night, and it's the staleness of everything round me that keeps me awake; and I can't eat or drink because everything tastes so

mouldy. If I don't eat nor sleep I shall die; so come and keep me alive, you monkey, come and keep me alive!"

In spite of Katty's struggles, the door was shut, the coachman touched his horses, and the coach set off; the old lady nodding with excitement, and Katty making rueful faces through the window back at Dan, who remained disconsolate among his cauliflowers and roses, with his second piece of business untransacted on his hands.

Lady Cumberbach lived in a tall, gaunt house, in a square, with four servants, two tom-cats, a parrot, a dog, and a monkey. Her rooms were luxuriously furnished, and there were plenty of them; so many indeed, that some were always locked, and never entered, except when the monkey played his favourite trick of opening their doors with a stolen key. The windows were dark with heavy hangings, the stairs were dark, and the hall and passages. The air was heavy with perfumes, and fires were always burning lest there should be a breath of chill or damp. The carpets were all of a plum-pudding pattern, and the stiff silk curtains were covered with flowers as big as tea-saucers. The windows did not open, so that it was little wonder that the dame should gasp for a mouthful of freshness, or that her flowers should wither after a day in the heated atmosphere of her dwelling.

Lady Cumberbach was assisted from her coach by a gold-headed staff, as well as by the arm of her footman. She could walk into her dining-room with the help of the stick alone, but she had to be carried upstairs when she went to her drawing-room or bedroom. She never went at all beyond the second flight of stairs; it was many a year since her feet had travelled the long, winding staircase which soared to the dimness and silence of the neglected upper story. The place was haunted, if not by the dead, at least by the ghosts of sad, living people, who ought to have been housed in these empty chambers, but suffered somewhere in the blast of the world outside. Fear of such ghostly footsteps kept the dame awake at nights, and it was the dread of their wandering voices that made her nail down her windows, and muffle up her doors, lest the wicked wind should mock her with the sound of a human wail.

Katty knew nothing of this when she sat with her at breakfast, and had tea and smoking cutlets from the slim and noiseless footman. At table were Katty and Dame Cumberbach, the monkey, and the

dog, the parrot, and the two tom-cats. All had tea and cutlets, and what with the general remarks of the company, there was little danger of annoyance from the sighs of ghosts. Katty chattered to the old lady, making her shriek and shake with laughter. The dame still kept her furs, though there was a fire, and over them wore the fine lace pelerine.

"I'll wear it now, while it is fresh," said her ladyship. "By-and-bye, when it is stale, I shall get to hate it. Everything is sure to turn stale as soon as it becomes used to this mouldy house!"

After breakfast Dame Cumberbach fell suddenly asleep in her chair; the monkey retired to a corner, and curled himself up for a doze, the cats blinked their eyes, and rolled themselves into balls on the hearth, the parrot twisted himself into a contortion of repose on his perch, and the pug burrowed in his cushion, and snored aloud. If her ladyship could not sleep at nights, she would, at all events, try to make up for it while the sun was high in the sky. The little guest was beginning to wonder if the cook was asleep at the fire, and the maids at their work, when the door opened softly, and the footman brought in a dusting brush, with which he swept all the dust, and little Katty, out of the room.

"People musn't stay here," he said, "unless they choose to sleep;" and vanished to the lower regions, leaving Katty bewildered in the hall. She soon recovered her wits, however, and began to climb the stairs; went up and up, meeting nobody till she got quite into the silent stories of Lady Cumberbach's haunted house.

The flights of stairs were long and steep, the lobby windows high and gaunt, shrouded with blinds of a dusky hue, and on the first high landing stood an old-fashioned clock, a tall, spare figure erect upon fierce claws: with a wild white face, bristling helmet, and a dreadful loud heart beating under its ribs. Katty knew nothing about fear, having met with no cause for it. Smiles, and jokes, and flowers had been her portion, hard work, and love, and rude living. Mystery did not awe her; she shook the handle of a door that stood facing the clock, but the door was locked.

The monkey here came hopping up-stairs with the key in his hand; at which sight Katty broke out into such laughter, that it was a wonder Dame Cumberbach did not wake moaning out of her sleep. Thanks to muffled doors, no such catastrophe occurred, and Katty entered the chamber along with the monkey. It was a large

room, and elegantly fitted with delicate silk hangings, which were sadly stained by the dust. There were mirrors from floor to ceiling, which had become as dim as if they had been eyes blinded by tears; pictures and statuettes, a piano and guitar, with piles of yellow music-paper, and ornaments of tarnished gold. On the wall hung a picture of a beautiful, smiling girl in a satin gown, and with jewels in her ears, with winning eyes, and waving hair, and cheeks that were fairer than Katty's. Who could this maiden be? thought the girl. Never Lady Cumberbach, even if painted a hundred years. Leaving this chamber, Katty peered down through the banisters, and saw no one coming to seek for her. She therefore grew bolder, and tripped up a winding staircase, which led to the top-most story of the house. At the top of this flight there was a wooden gate, which opened with a spring, and then Katty was in a second room, which was also unlocked by the key the monkey had brought.

This was a nursery. There were pictures of pretty children on the wall, and a guard round the fireplace to keep little ones from burning their rosy fingers. The monkey hopped before Katty with his head sadly on one side, and a serious look on his face, as he flung open drawers and presses, and exposed the contents of cupboards to the light of day. Mugs hung in the cupboards as if placed there only that morning after breakfast, and shelves were lined with long-disused toys. The monkey dived into drawers, shaking out frocks and pinafores, stockings, and tiny shoes. Katty looked at these in amazement, folded, and restored them to their hiding-places, stepping softly about, and holding her breath, afraid to break the hush of this quiet place. These rooms were a mystery to her. Had Lady Cumberbach, then, had children, and were they dead? There were little beds in an inner room, in which four little forms must have slept, and on which, perhaps, four little coffins had lain. After much wondering, the girl turned her back upon this puzzle. She closed softly the nursery door, and, still followed by the monkey, took her way down the stairs again to the hall. There was no life anywhere; she was seized with a longing to be out in the living sunshine, back again in the flower-market, with the country scents around her. She opened the hall-door, and, in another moment, was gone.

Next morning Dan drove into the market with an anxious face, which brightened when he saw Katty among the flowers.

"Ah!" he cried. "So you have really come back! What have I not suffered since the old woman ran away with you. But it is now my turn to carry you off."

He then explained the business that had been left unsettled yesterday. His mother wanted to see Katty, the little maid who loved her son. London was hot and dusty, and the country must be a treat to a creature whose entire world consisted of a block of crowded streets. Would Katty go down to Applethorpe? The girl's eyes danced, and she needed no second bidding. She took her seat by Dan's side in the cart, and the horse was soon trotting along the road.

Up hill and down whirled the two young lovers in their market-cart. The air grew sweeter and fresher as the houses fled behind them, and clumps of trees came starting out of the distance, nodding a breezy welcome to the girl whose eyes had never rested on such a sight before. On, on, through miles of green hedges, with corn-fields and meadow-lands lying beyond. Rosy-cheeked farmers shouted a good morrow to the little travellers, and home-returning milkmaids set down their brimming pails to gaze after the flying cart. Children clapped hands and cheered, and housewives looked out of their doorways. Every one knew Dan, but every one wondered who Katty might be.

Quick as the young people were, Dan's mother thought them long in performing their journey. They found her watching at her garden gate, looking down the road, with her two brown hands above her eyes. Dan's mother walked with a crutch, and was a small white-haired woman, in a scant brown gown, with bolster sleeves hooked round her shrivelled wrists, and a snow-white cap and apron, that made her glitter like a new-made pin. Her stout red-brick cottage glowed among laden fruit-trees at the lower end of the garden; hens that had done their duty that morning clucked a welcome round the doorway, while warm new-laid eggs waited on the breakfast-table. The widow's homely kitchen shone like a diamond, and Katty was perched in a high stuffed arm-chair, with a foot-stool attached to it, while Dan buttered smoking cakes on her plate, and his mother poured fragrant tea into the cups. This was a very different breakfast-table from that at which she had eaten but yesterday morning. No luxuries, no oddities, no cats and monkeys here; only signs of cheerful labour, peaceful comfort, and plenty of love. How Katty was taken round the cottage to look into drawers and cupboards,

how the delft plates were counted to her, and the little stores of linen spread under her eyes, how she visited every inch of the teeming garden, how she was introduced to the rose-tree named Katty, and the calf that licked her hand in token of friendship, how Dan's employer was so charmed with her merry eyes that he presented her with a bouquet—of all these doings it would take too long to tell. Twilight came down upon their garden before these happy cottagers thought the day had well begun. Then they all sat down to rest within the open doorway, and to talk in that dreamy way in which people talk at the hour between night and day. There was still a crimson line with a fringe of gold lying low along the sky behind the pear-trees, and the lattice window had espied it out, and shone with gazing at it. The dew was already at work, distilling delicious aroma out of the flowers. Peace was brooding over everything, like a sweet-breathed wide-winged angel, descending lower, and ever lower, with the dusk, upon the earth, and under the shelter of his robe came a slight dim figure down the pathway towards the cottage.

"Ah, it is Mrs. Huckleberry," said Dan's mother. "Dear, dear, dear, but happiness does make a body selfish. I never thought of her once this livelong day."

Dan sprang up to leave his chair for the visitor, who wore a dark faded gown, a whity-black cloak, supposed to be waterproof, hanging in a limp desponding manner about the angles of her shoulders. Her face, even in the dusk, suggested starvation; the eyes were bright and sunk, and the cheek-bones marked as only want could mark them. Hardships had drawn a cruel cord round a mouth which had once been pretty; yet with all these sad disfigurements the pale dim Mrs. Huckleberry possessed a certain charm of indescribable grace. She was a lady in all her movements, and her bearing was dignified by the tender humility in her eyes. All this Katty discerned even in the dusk, while a strange fancy took possession of her—an idea that she had seen Mrs. Huckleberry before. And not very long ago either, though the memory of such meeting with her was like a dream in Katty's mind.

"And so this is your little London friend," said the pale lady. "How youth will sometimes bloom in spite of smoke and soot!" She sighed, passing her hand over Katty's rounded cheek, and thinking of some cheeks that would not bloom in spite

of the encouraging breeze that blew round the fields of Applethorpe.

"Ay, this is our Katty," said the widow, "who will belong to us altogether by-and-bye. And how is your poor little Jacky, ma'am? for, shame to say, I did not go near the place since seven o'clock this morning."

"Pretty well," said the sad lady, sighing. "I left him asleep. I have been sewing in the village all day, and ever since I got home something has kept urging me to come and see your visitor. Here I am, come in the end because I could not help it."

The meek lady sat among her humble friends for a full hour, and as the simple talk went round Katty often met the stranger's bright eyes, which would fix themselves on the girl's happy face. Where could it have been that the same soft glance had rested on her so lately? Katty did not know, could not guess; but in every pause of the conversation found herself wandering in fancy through the deserted upper story of Lady Cumberbach's house. Katty was not used to mysteries, and her head began to go round. The fascination of the stranger was such that when she rose to depart Katty sprang up also, and asked to be taken with her. "Let me see the children," she said, and the pale Mrs. Huckleberry actually blushed with gratification. She seized Katty by the hand, while Dan and his mother nodded their consent. As they stepped out of the doorway the lady's shadowy face looked back at the blooming one following her. That glance of the eyes, that turn of the head—where had she seen them before? thought Katty.

The moon had risen high, and the apples were rimmed with silver, the paths were white as though there had been a snow-storm, and the roses were glistening with dew on their bushes. The pale-faced woman hovered along between flower-beds and fruit-trees, guiding her steps daintily, with a grace never learned from the peasants at Applethorpe, and Katty followed her through gardens and meadows till, quite at the end of the pea-field, appeared a log-built cabin nestling for shelter in the bowery hedge.

There were two rooms in the cabin, in both of which Katty found that she could stand straight, but Mrs. Huckleberry, who was tall, had to stoop as she moved about. There were but three articles of furniture in the place, and on the table lay some sewing work, and a candle ready to be lighted. Here would the poor lady sit and sew till her sunken eyes had out-watched

the stars. In the second room, curled up in a bed which almost covered the floor, lay the four sleeping children; little Jacky with his white lips and transparent eyelids, Polly with rosy cheeks, and chubby arms tossed over her head, Nell with a look of care on her sleeping brows, and Tom, who had such an appetite for bread and milk, and who could not understand why it was often not to be had. Katty kissed their lips and straightened their covering as if she had been a mother all her life; and Mrs. Huckleberry embraced her, crying, "Would God make such creatures as these, little Katty, and then let them die of hunger?" At which Katty began to weep, vowing she would starve herself to death sooner than believe it.

"Ah," said the little girl, "to think of Lady Cumberbach with her table spread for cats and dogs!"

"Cumberbach!" echoed the poor lady, and began to shake as if a wind had come through the doorway. "Where does she live?"

"In Blank-square," said Katty, "in a house great enough for a hospital."

Whereupon Mrs. Huckleberry sank trembling on her children's bed, murmuring, "Little Katty, Lady Cumberbach is my mother."

Katty stared. "Do not speak," said the sad lady, "but let us get out into the air." And again they walked silently through the dim flowers in the garden under the moonlight.

"Sit down with me under this southern-wood bush," said Mrs. Huckleberry at last, and thus sheltered and hid away out of the world the timid creature whispered her life's history into the little market-woman's ear. The only child of an unloving mother, she had married against that mother's will. She had chosen love and poverty, and with them sickness and death, in exchange for luxury, and selfishness, and sloth of heart. She was now a widow, and had asked in vain for the crumbs that fell from her mother's table. Mrs. Huckleberry wept in relating her woes, but Katty sat lost in wonder.

"Dreadful, dreadful," she cried. "We will not bear it any longer." Mrs. Huckleberry shook her head, but Katty stamped her foot.

"How are we going to help it, Katty?"

"I do not know; but why have I come here if not to do something? We must drive the cats and dogs from your mother's table, Mrs. Huckleberry, and put your children in their place."

The meek lady stared at the audacious little woman. "God bless you, my girl!" she said, "but you do not know what you are talking about."

Then Dan was seen coming along the garden path, and the pale lady went back to her vigil. Katty dreamt that night of Lady Cumberbach sitting at her fireside with little Jacky in her lap; while the monkey walked round the market-gardens—all enclosed in Lady Cumberbach's dining-room—leading Jacky's sisters and brother by the hand.

CHAPTER II.

WINTER set in, and Katty's merchandise was not so blooming as when we first made her acquaintance. She had often to set down her basket, so that she might slap her cold hands together, for they would freeze even under the mittens that Dan's mother had sent her. Katty was a little downcast, even though Dan's kind heart was more loving than ever, and the time was approaching when he would carry her off for good in his cart to Applethorpe. She was sad only in the interests of the thin Mrs. Huckleberry. Lady Cumberbach was no longer among Katty's patrons, having taken offence at the manner in which the girl had left her house on that memorable summer morning, without waiting for dismissal. When her coach now arrived in the market, the old lady addressed herself to other merchants, and when her pet of old approached her, Lady Cumberbach turned her face the other way; and so Katty found herself powerless to give help to her friends.

One day the footman whom Katty remembered presented himself in the market, and asked for the little flower-girl. His mistress was very ill, he said, and requested that the child would come to her. As quickly as feet could carry her Katty made her way to the great mansion in the square. The place was more quiet than usual as the girl crept in at the door of the dame's bedroom, and saw a wrinkled sallow face tossing uneasily among the pillows of a fine state bed. The blinds were all down, and the rich flowered curtains carefully drawn. A large fire burned, and there was a powerful odour of musk in the room. Lady Cumberbach had taken to her bed without exactly knowing what was the matter with her. She declared to her doctor that it was the staleness of everything that had at last overpowered her, and the doctor shook his head, and thought that she was sinking under a long course of selfishness and luxury. The pets were

brought to her bedside, but they were frightened at the fine lace flounces on her night-cap, and screamed about the room so that they had to be sent away. It was then that Lady Cumberbach, lying upon her back and staring upward, with no occupation but that of watching the dying flies crawling across the ceiling, felt the last agony of desolation seize on her heart. It was then that, as the drowning man will catch at a straw, she rang her bell frantically and sent in search of the little flower-maiden.

"Why do you come into my room with your bonnet on?" she asked sharply as Katty entered the chamber. "I want you to nurse me; so hang up your walking things, and sit down beside me."

She had quite expected that the girl would rebel, and though feeling herself at Katty's mercy, yet the wretched old woman could not restrain the bitterness that overflowed her dreary soul. To her amazement, Katty dropped a curtsy, and put her bonnet out of sight, tied on an apron and began arranging the fireplace, all with the quickest of noiseless movements and the cheeriest of smiles. Then on the harsh visage of the invalid there glimmered something like satisfaction, and she sank back on her pillows. Well might she have rejoiced if she had known the truth, that Katty had come to save her body and soul.

There was great discontent among the servants when it was found that Katty was installed as nurse, for though they had neglected their mistress for their own part, yet they did not like to have a stranger put in the place they had failed to fill. But Katty was not afraid of them; if they did not bring what she asked for, she walked down into the midst of them and chose for herself the thing she wanted. They began to admire her spirit, and finding her full of good humour, they at last became her friends. This was pleasant, but Katty had business to do, and she did not know how it was to be done. She sat pondering it in the quiet sick-room while her patient slept, and the daylight waned, and the fire-light made a dull glow about the spot where she was sitting, with nothing to do but listen to the ticking of the fierce clock on the upper landing, while she thought about Mrs. Huckleberry and her four famishing children.

Sometimes the old lady would wake up suddenly and command her little nurse to tell her stories, brisk stirring stories about the world of healthy people abroad in the streets. Katty did this bidding to the best

of her power, and Lady Cumberbach was enchanted with the new treatment of her case. She became interested in Katty's crude and sketchy annals of the poor, and for an hour at a time would forget the staleness of everything. She had refused all food, but could now take a cup of gruel after each recital.

One evening the patient called as usual for her story, and Katty began to pour forth a sad tale of a meek lady with four children who lived in a hut in a hedge of a pea-field close by Applethorpe.

"The lady is so thin," said Katty, "that you can almost see through her body."

"Ah, well!" said Dame Cumberbach, "perhaps she has been lying in bed a weary time like me."

"No," said Katty, "she is always on her feet. Besides she is quite a young woman, and ought to be fat and strong. Her thinness is caused by starvation."

"I don't quite believe that," said the dame, fidgeting; "but get on to a pleasanter part of the story."

"She sits up all night sewing," said Katty, "and she sews the whole day, yet she cannot feed her children. Children have such appetites, I can tell you! You know nothing about that, of course. You never had any children, Lady Cumberbach?"

The dame bounced in her bed at this abrupt question. She raised her weird hand as if she would strike little Katty, but let it fall again and groaned.

"Don't ask foolish questions," said she, faintly, "but go on and tell me about that 'lady' as you call her."

"But she is a lady, madam—I know her story. There is a picture in the next room of a beautiful girl in a satin gown. The poor mother was once like that, my Lady Cumberbach."

"How dare you say that?" cried the patient, sitting up in her bed.

"Now lie down, my lady dear, or I shall have to go back to the market. You asked for a story; but of course, if you are tired of me you must tell me, and I shall go."

Katty rose as she spoke, but the old lady pulled her by the hand.

"There, there, there! go on and say what you please. Your people are all strangers to me. Why should I trouble about their affairs?"

"I will tell you the lady's history. Her mother is a wealthy woman who feeds cats and dogs, and will not spare a crumb for her famishing grandchildren. The children's father was loving and poor, the grandmother rich and hard. My poor thin

lady is hated only because she wanted to be loved a little. Her husband is dead, her children are dying. They will soon be all together in their graves——"

"Stop!" shrieked Lady Cumberbach, "or I will have you punished. I have fallen into the hands of a wretch who will drive me mad!"

She moaned bitterly, with her face buried in the pillows. Katty began to mend the fire and to prepare the old lady's gruel.

Christmas was now at hand, and the cook was preparing good cheer for the festive time, saying that her mistress would be indignant if the old practice were forgotten. The dame was sick; but there were the cats, and the parrot, and the dogs to be entertained as befitted Christians, never to speak of the maids, the slim footman, and the fat coachman. Katty sat at the sick-room fire, and smelt savoury odours floating up the staircase, and through the keyhole. And she thought of the hungry Huckleberrys. Her patient lay in bed with closed eyes and knotted brows, and received her little attentions in sullen silence: did not ask a question nor make a remark, and wished for no further story-telling. Katty fled up to the nursery one evening to cry in the dark over her failure, and walked about wringing her hands with the monkey mournfully following her. Even now the cold was pinching little half-covered limbs, quite out of reach of her help, in the frost at Applethorpe. Getting reckless with pity she flew to the chest of drawers, where lay all that warm childrens' clothing which she had seen on that summer day, took out some frocks and stockings and little shoes, unhooked from the cupboard shelf the four china mugs with the baby names gilt upon them and shining in the lamp-light from the street, gathered all in the skirt of her gown, and returned to Lady Cumberbach's room.

"Where have you been?" asked the patient, discontentedly.

"In the nursery, your ladyship."

Dame Cumberbach sat up in bed, as if she must once for all do battle.

"Who told you there was a nursery, and what did you want in it?"

"Some clothing for those poor children I was telling you about. The weather is terribly cold. In a bed in a warm room one does not feel it; but in a hovel under a hedge, with no fire and the snow around—ah, Lady Cumberbach, it is different!"

Katty spread out her spoils upon the counterpane as she spoke:

"So I thought you would give me these

things which were mouldering up yonder in the drawers. And these mugs very strangely have the childrens' names gilt upon them—there is Jack and there is Poll: here is Nell and little Tom. These are the names of the children who are starving."

The wretched old woman tried to rise and speak aloud, but fell back whimpering and staring at Katty.

"Besides," said the girl, not minding her, "you ought to pity these hungry people because the mother's name was Cumberbach."

A cry broke from the sick woman, and she spread her shaking hands before her face, as if she would hide herself from Katty. "Go!" she said at last, and the girl was terrified and fled. Listening at the door Katty heard raving and mourning in a fearful voice, and fled still further away out of hearing. After a time she crept back and found silence—the silence of despair in the lonely chamber. As she hesitated before entering, the aged voice broke forth aloud:

"Now I have, indeed, driven away my good angel. My God, I deserve to be so forsaken!"

Upon this Katty stole into the room and found Lady Cumberbach lying on her pillows in an agonised attitude, with the bundle of little frocks hugged up to her breast. At the sound of the footsteps she started and growled:

"Is that you again?"

"Yes," said Katty.

"Have you been listening at the door?"

"Yes," said Katty. "And, oh, dear Lady Cumberbach, let me make you happy. Let me bring those little children."

"Silence!" cried Lady Cumberbach.

Katty said no more, but curled herself up to sleep behind the foot of the patient's bed. There was no rest that night for the dame. Katty heard her tossing from side to side; but after some hours she grew quiet, and the little nurse thought she slept. As soon as there was a streak of day Katty popped her head above the foot-board of the bed, and saw the dame lying with wide-open eyes gazing towards the window through which the dawn was creeping; and there was a change upon her face which made Katty's heart leap. There was a murmuring sound as if the old woman was praying; Katty shrank back, unwilling to disturb her; when Lady Cumberbach caught her eye and sprang up in the bed.

"Bring them to me!" she cried, opening her arms, while a strange light flashed out of her face.

"Who?" asked Katty, bewildered.

"The children and their mother. Bring them quickly!"

Katty needed no second bidding. She fled from the house and arrived in the market just as Dan was mounting his cart to drive back to the country.

"Dan, Dan! Take me with you to Applethorpe."

"Ah, Katty, you runaway! I'll take you to Applethorpe, I warrant me."

"Fast, fast. I have such a deal to tell as we ride along."

Away they scampered off into the country. Katty told her story, and Dan, after his first burst of triumph at Katty's success, informed her of the sad state in which the Huckleberry family had lately lived.

"Only for my mother," he said, "they'd be dead from cold and hunger."

There was a scene of great excitement when Katty came flying along the frosty paths of the market-gardens and darted into the hut in the hedge of the pea-field. Mrs. Huckleberry was sitting on her hearth, which was quite cold, trying to rub a little warmth into poor Jacky's feet. She fainted away at the news, but was soon restored to her senses again, and able to help to dress the children in the comfortable clothing which Katty had brought them for the journey. Before the sun had set the thin lady had turned her back for ever on her hovel, and the cart packed with people had set out in glee from Applethorpe, and was again on the road to London.

The red sun glowed on them and on the beautiful snow-covered fields. The twilight came and sparks flashed from the flints under the horse's hoofs. The stars came out and blazed for triumph, and then our party arrived very tired at the great house in the London square. Katty stayed on the landing while the pale lady led her children into the bedroom to her mother. When the young girl ventured to peep in she found the children crawling over grandmother's bed, and Mrs. Huckleberry sitting clasping her mother's hand. The next day Lady Cumberbach was able to rise from bed. The staleness had gone from everything, and a new tide of life had flowed into her veins. The nursery was taken possession of at once, and the room where the picture hung was put in order for its tenant of former days. The feast provided for Christmas was not wasted, and the cats and dogs received only a fair share of it.

How Katty ruled in the nursery, how she shook the old red curtains across the windows, and made the fire roar; how

the old brass fire-guard shone and twinkled, and once more made itself useful to protect rosy fingers from the flames; how the four little beds were newly spread with linen, and the old toys pulled forth; how Mrs. Huckleberry cried when she heard the laughter of her children—of all this it is not necessary to give more than a hint.

"These," said Mrs. Huckleberry, taking up the mugs, which were set out for the children's tea, "belonged to myself and my sister and brothers who are dead. My children are named as we were named."

"They have been too long empty," said Katty, and filled them; and grandmamma's health was drunk all round.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XIV. SKIRMISHING.

EVERYBODY kept vowing that Mr. Doughty had not only grown young, but was growing younger every day; and indeed there was a brightness in his face and bearing, an excitement, a general interest in the world about him, which took at least ten years off his age. The acidity had worn off; his manner had become gracious and genial. He was talkative, gay—amused others, and was amused himself. It was declared (by the matrons), with enthusiasm, that "had he not a penny in the world," he was a charming man, to whom they would be delighted to give their daughters. What an exquisite taste was his—so refined! And how nicely he touched that curious instrument—what was it called?—the viola, giving it quite an individuality. Then the piano. To hear him accompany; what a treat! How he helped that girl through, who had not such a wonderful voice after all. There was the only blemish—one slight speck upon the sun. There was something unbecoming in this infatuation for a singer's daughter; though, of course, it might be only due to a pure love of art.

The position assumed by Mr. Nagle, however, was what mystified people most. That gentleman seemed to be installed altogether on the premises. He sat in the study permanently, as it were, at a secretaire, conducting correspondence, arranging the business matters of his friend, sending off telegrams, overlooking accounts, and performing all sorts of mysterious duties, which seemed to suggest his being at the head of some great counting-house. He

seemed to look on music as quite a subsidiary matter. Meanwhile the enchanting Corinna played in the great music-room, lighting it up with her presence, filling it with her inspiration, and gradually helping to work that change in the wealthy owner of the establishment which had caused so much remark in Brickford.

It was during one of these practices that the door opened suddenly, and Lady Duke presented herself. Mr. Nagle was at a desk in the corner writing despatches, Corinna was enthroned at the instrument. The music stopped. The situation was embarrassing, but Lady Duke was equal to it.

"Don't stop, don't stop," she cried, in a sort of anguish; but they did stop nevertheless. Behind her was her son.

Corinna rose up with a haughty dignity, Mr. Nagle coloured.

"I insist on your going on, my dear Mr. Doughty. You must not mind me. I wouldn't for the world interrupt your fine music." The fine music, however, had been interrupted. The performers felt that the temple was, as it were, profaned, and the charm gone.

"You have come to stay here?" said Mr. Doughty, coldly. "A curious place to choose. I mean," he added hastily, "for a lady with your tastes."

"You may say that, but I declare to you it is the only place in which I have found health. What with Doctor Meiklejohn and the air, I quite forget my neuralgia."

Mr. Doughty laughed good-humouredly. "After this," he said, "physicians will be ordering their patients down to smoky Brickford, as they would to Nice or Arcachon." His eyes had followed Corinna, who had moved disdainfully away to the window, whither Mr. Duke had attended her. "And your son," he added, in a hardening tone, "does *he* also suffer from neuralgia?"

Lady Duke laughed loudly. "You dreadful creature, how you see everything. But can you wonder? A charming girl! I frankly own I was prejudiced against her at first, but I have really grown to admire her spirit. She has conquered me in spite of myself."

This was said in a frank, genuine fashion. He looked at her doubtingly, then said, "If you knew her, or allowed yourself but the chance, you would see—you would indeed see how worthy she is of admiration. I have never met such a character."

This was like a blow in the midriff for his hearer, but she assented with extravagant cordiality.

"So Alfred thinks," she answered; "he worships the very ground under her feet." This, she knew, was a return blow. "He is infatuated about her, and I really fear that he is prepared to go any lengths."

"And disgrace you and your family! A discreditable alliance, that would corrupt the blood of the Plantagenets."

"My goodness, no, my dear sir. You, of course, as a man of the world, must see that marriage between persons of different stations is always unsuitable. But, of course, when young men come to a certain age, and when," added Lady Duke, slowly, "they are bent on taking a certain step, why then the only duty of a parent is not to offer an unreasonable opposition. In fact, to make the best of what is unavoidable."

Again Mr. Doughty's eyes wandered to the window, where the young people seemed so much interested in each other, as to be unconscious of who was looking at them. This added proof to Lady Duke's assertion. What she said shot into his heart like an arrow, and the clever woman of the world in those few moments had created for herself a relationship with this newly-enriched being of a more important kind than the rather shadowy relationship in blood which she claimed with him.

She passed over to Mr. Nagle, who, fuming in wounded dignity, affected to be completing a heavy correspondence. "I was delighted," she said, "to hear that all went off so charmingly. And I have been wishing to see you, to thank you for the way in which you acceded to my wishes about Alfred's singing. I heard how you refused to allow of his appearance; it was most delicate and gentleman-like on your part."

Mr. Nagle coloured with pleasure, though startled at this unexpected version of his behaviour. He actually hurriedly tried back in his memory to see what had taken place, and to his surprise found that he had been careless as to Mr. Duke's appearance, and that his Corinna had vehemently opposed it. So he had behaved handsomely and in a gentleman-like way. It was lady-like and condescending in Lady Duke to make the acknowledgment. Still, some rather blunt expressions had been used, and language certainly contemptuous had been addressed to him.

"Your daughter, I fear," she went on, reading his face, "thinks I was a little hasty the other day. I own it. But you must consider a mamma's feelings, and poor Alfred you know would have made a sad

exhibition of himself. I could not bear to see him break down."

Delighted Mr. Nagle called enthusiastically to his daughter:

"Corinna, come over here. Lady Duke wishes——"

The haughty look with which Corinna turned round at these words! The no less scornful air with which she commenced a stately march across the room, and fairly confronted the lady!

"My lady was kind enough to mention that—er—little affair the other day, and to appreciate what we did. It is most good of her ladyship, Corinna——"

"What, on the day she entered our house, and spoke to you—to us," said she, with flashing eyes, "in a style that——"

"Oh, hush! nonsense," said Mr. Nagle, excitedly. "You don't understand."

"With all my heart," said Corinna. "But let no more be said of that, for it crushes me with humiliation even to think of it." And she swept away across the room.

Mr. Doughty was listening with wonder and unconcealed admiration.

"This is quite melodramatic," said Lady Duke, laughing. "But," she added, turning to Mr. Doughty, "I shall make my son Alfred intercede for me."

Again a sort of nervous spasm across Mr. Doughty's face. Corinna was a strange girl. It seemed as though she delighted in purposely tormenting the man who showed such a deep interest in her. It might be hard to analyse this feeling. But she no doubt wished to show that, in spite of all obligation, she was determined to retain her independence.

Lady Duke then resumed. "Do you know what I came to-day for? I am going to give a little party, with good music afterwards—really good, and I want you, my dear Mr. Doughty, to help me. I am sure Mr. Nagle will lend us his talents; in fact I would be glad if he would undertake the direction."

Mr. Nagle was enchanted. Would help in any way that her ladyship thought necessary.

"And your daughter—I don't know what to say, or how to ask her, unless, indeed, Alfred can persuade her."

"Don't let your ladyship be disturbed," said Mr. Nagle, who had latterly assumed quite a free and familiar manner that contrasted oddly with his former obsequiousness. "Here, Corinna——"

"Hush," said Mr. Doughty. "All this only worries her. You cannot force a high spirit to go through such humiliations."

Mr. Duke and Corinna had meantime again come over.

"Humiliation," said he, "for Miss Corinna Nagle. Who wishes to humiliate her, pray? What strange ideas Mr. Doughty has."

"How ridiculously you talk, Alfred," said his mother. "I was only hoping that Miss Nagle would sing at our party."

"Which Mr. Doughty thinks would be humiliation, I see."

"Don't misinterpret what I said," replied the other, his voice slightly trembling. "Perhaps we might have meant that you once thought it a humiliation to sing at Mr. Nagle's. The malicious in this place may have put that very construction on your refusal. It had all the look of it."

The malicious, too, looking at the almost vehement tone with which this speech was delivered, might have assumed that he entertained the bitterest dislike to the man to whom his words were addressed. Alfred Duke, though ordinarily considered a "cool hand," was much taken back, and a mortified look came into his face. Corinna looked at the speaker with something like indignation.

"Mr. Duke hardly deserved that; it was not his fault if he could not keep his engagement," she said, quietly.

This was all; but the speech had a curious effect on those listening. Over Mr. Doughty's face passed an expression of pain and positive anguish; over that of Lady Duke one of disturbance and hostility; over that of Mr. Alfred one of triumph. In short, it was the presence of jealousy, dislike, and the feeling of success.

CHAPTER XV. MR. DOUGHTY'S CONCERT.

A PARTY of singers were being led round the country by a musical "farmer," and posters were on the dead and living walls of Brickford. There was Signora Scampini, of the Italian Opera; Mr. Boomersong, modestly described as "the greatest of English barytones;" a young lady who brought round a couple of what are called "royalty songs," Patty so Shy, and Half My Heart, both by Blue Bell, whose fame in fitting such trifles had travelled through the length and breadth of the land; Herr Boralowski, the famous 'cello player; Monsieur Piquette, the no less famous violinist; and Mr. Ryder Baker, as accompanist, conductor, and soloist. They were to give two grand concerts of vocal and instrumental music. But more interesting was the news that the whole party was to attend at a soirée given, regardless of expense, by

Mr. Doughty, and where, of course, Miss Corinna was to be prima donna. Mr. Nagle, indeed, triumphantly told his friends that the whole was for Corinna's glory; that Jenkinson, the famous opera house manager, was coming down on a visit to Mr. Doughty, and was to pronounce on her merits as a singer. The wealthy amateur was now in such a position, that any reasonable wish of his was certain to be attended to, so that the realisation of the early dream of Mr. Nagle—his daughter figuring in that brilliant and blissful scene as Signora Naglioni—did not seem so far off after all. The Nagles had fallen, not, indeed, on their feet, as the people round them were fond of saying, but on a vast expanse of ottomans and down cushions. The preparations seemed to be under the sole direction of Mr. Nagle, and everything of the handsomest and richest was being ordered in. Workmen were seen covering in a portion of the garden, which was to be fitted up with rich furniture and costly shrubs got down from Covent Garden; in short, "everything that money could do"—which, after all, often does very little, as regards taste and effect—was done.

The musical farmer and his musical farm stock had already arrived, and the night for Mr. Doughty's entertainment had come round. Every one of position in Brickford had been asked. Lady Duke had constituted herself a sort of Almack's patroness of the affair, and had even proposed to officiate as hostess, a proposal which, to her surprise, was coldly declined. But her daughter Emmeline had been sent home from the finishing school, "finished" in due time. She was a handsome, showy-looking, large-eyed girl, not in the least shy, yet not bold, but with a comfortable absence of delicacy which would make her persevere in her ends, matrimonial or otherwise, without being in the least daunted by a rebuff, or, indeed, seeming to be conscious of one. Her mother and herself, though their official services in reception of the guests had been declined, had, with a force not to be resisted, contrived to introduce themselves on the premises during the daytime as decorators and arrangers. Their good offices, not to be avoided by anything short of direct expulsion, had been indifferently accepted by Mr. Doughty, though both declared that Mr. Doughty "must leave everything to them," and concentrate all his thoughts and exertions on the musical department. But Lady Duke and her daughter saw, with a certain ruefulness, that the whole festival was in honour of the

enchancing Corinna, and a certain instinct warned them that on that night some final and decisive step would be taken which might be fatal to their cherished designs. And what chiefly disturbed Lady Duke was the suddenly suspicious manner of Mr. Nagle, who had grown curt and blunt in his manner, and made several attempts to dislodge her from the premises.

Lady Duke, when she came down from dressing, was thoughtful, and felt there was a great responsibility on her. She found her son waiting, and she noticed he was a little nervous and excited. "This is going to be a great night," she said. "Mark my words, Alfred, Brickford will have something to gossip about to-morrow."

The young man understood her, and asked her, eagerly: "What do you know? Did you hear anything?"

"Oh, I had my eyes and ears open all the day. Those Nagles are very clever, very—regular adventurers; not, of course, your Corinna. But, in her innocent guilty way, she has led on the old fellow in excellent style."

"You don't understand, mother," he said, with an air of superiority. "I know her better than you. Her father forces her to do all that——"

"What, after being in the man's house morning, noon, and night, strumming away at his piano with his fiddlers! No, no. There is no forcing her into it. And, indeed, a girl of her sort is not to be blamed. She must make the best of such a fine chance."

"I tell you," said the son, "you are quite wrong. She would not look at Old Doughty."

"And I tell you, you don't know the world."

The carriage was announced, and the party went down-stairs. On the road Mr. Duke was silent; like all men, he was overstocked with vanity, and would really have sacrificed anything to prove that he was irresistible *de par l'amour*. No one knew this better than his worldly parent, who, for that night at least, had determined to play a rather risky game. So convinced was she that Mr. Doughty would propose that night to Corinna, and be accepted, that she had resolved on the desperate extremity of interposing her own son as a barrier, trusting to her ingenuity to rescue him later.

The rooms at Mr. Doughty's presented the most brilliant appearance. They overflowed with the "cream of the cream," such as it was, of Brickford. The large

music-room had been laid out with rows upon rows of chairs, filled with the wealth, and fashion, and beauty of the place. There was abundance of the first, not much of the second, and scarcely any of the third. The platform was framed in a perfect garden of shrubs and flowers, and the music seemed to issue from a sort of bower. Every one agreed that the whole was done magnificently, and in perfect taste. But Old Doughty was now boiled young again in a golden pot, and taste, and gallantry, and magnificence, as we know, are natural accompaniments of youth.

But they saw his quiet, thoughtful face lit up with the brightness of happiness as he led Corinna to the place of honour at the top of the room. There was a pride, an exultation in his eyes, and some ladies vowed he looked positively handsome, though "candidates," as they might be called, looked grim, and wondered "at the boldness of some people." Who could submit to be led up in such a style, before all that crowd? Certainly on that night the heroine looked a perfect princess, and Mr. Duke, surveying her progress, watching from afar off her flushed cheek and the pride of her cavalier, bit his glove and stamped his foot impatiently.

The people about, who knew him by sight as well as they did the market cross, were looking round with curiosity, and, as he fancied, with enjoyment, to see "how he took it." This was infinitely mortifying and irritating. But the spectacle of Corinna, thus followed with admiration and envy, led up by her devoted admirer, to be dazzled by such homage, with all the splendours of wealth which were about to be laid at her feet, was almost too much for him. He was not a profound analyst of his own emotions, or, indeed, of emotions in general, and he set this feeling down to deep passion, and perhaps to jealousy. But the supremacy of his rival which amused, and was seen by, that large assemblage, was what really disturbed him.

The "Squallinis"—so used Mr. Nagle to contemptuously describe the ladies and gentlemen of his own profession of the "assoluta" class—had done their work. The Italian signora had voiced a very difficult medley of "runs," trills, vocal leaps, which had about the same relation to true music as the steps of a prize clog-dancer have to the performance of a Cerito, when the turn of Corinna arrived. She came for-

ward as composed as the Italian, but with a grace and dignity foreign to the nature of that artist. Her beautiful and classical face was lit up with a true inspiration, an expression very different from that of the artificial gymnast who had preceded her. But what a flutter went round the audience when the spare figure of Mr. Doughty was seen seated at the pianoforte, and his delicate fingers began the sad symphony of the solemn strain in Orfeo. Then her full rich voice, charged with feeling and passion, was lifted up and floated down in melodious waves to the end of the room, making even unmusical senses vibrate with a strange sense. There was the tenderest grief and sense of bereavement, and a wonderful dramatic feeling. The whole scene came before them, without scenery or stage; the whole story was told by the noble music alone. The Italian signora, listening with surprise, was biting her lips with a spiteful expression. When it was over, and the last melodious tones had died away, a burst of applause spread in waves over the room. Corinna stood there a queen, an empress, as indeed she might have been for that timid adorer who was gazing on her with reverence and rapture. What did genteel Brickford think now after this recognition and association in public? "Opera house" Jenkinson, as he was called, was seen to leap forward enthusiastically, and appeared to stream compliments.

The next piece being a serious task, a heavy Mozart business—so many square feet of earth to be dug out within half an hour or so with musical spades and shovels—he found his way to Corinna's side, and after a whisper, led her away out of that crowded room to one of those improvised greenhouses where were scattered various pairs and parties for whom the music of their own discourse had a greater charm than the common crotchets and quavers. The Doughty eyes, though fixed on the Mozartian notes, strayed uneasily in the direction of the two departing figures. All through the easy progress of the allegro, the heavy ploughed field of the adagio, and the pleasant asphalt of the presto, they were absent. Then followed the barytone's ditty, which covered a good deal of space, but they did not return. Anxious eyes looked towards the door; and at last the audience saw Mr. Doughty leaving the room.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 218. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BOSS AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER XXXII. FAREWELL MISS WARE.

I DO not mean to describe the terrible scenes that followed. When death comes attended with a scandal like this, every recollection connected with it is torture. The gross and ghastly publicity; the merciless prying into details; and over all the gloom of the maddest and most mysterious of crimes! You look in vain in the shadow for the consoling image of hope and repose; a medium is spread around that discolors and horrifies, and the Tempter seems to haunt the house.

Then the outrage of a public tribunal canvassing the agitations and depressions of "the deceased" in the house which within a few days was his own, handling the fatal pistol, discussing the wounds, the silent records of a mental agony that happy men cannot even imagine, and that will for life darken the secret reveries of those who loved the dead!

But as one of our proverbs, old as the days of Glastonbury, says:

Be the day never so long,
At length cometh the even song.

Mamma is now in her crape and widow's cap. I in my deep mourning also, laden with crape. A great many people have called to inquire, and have left cards. A few notes, which could not be withheld, of embarrassed condolence, have come from the more intimate, who thought themselves obliged to make that sacrifice and exertion. Two or three were very kind indeed. Sore does one feel at the desertions that attend a great and sudden change of fortune. But I do not, on fairly thinking it over, believe that there is more selfishness or less good

nature in the world in which we were living, than in that wider world which lies at a lower social level. We are too ready to take the intimacies of pleasure or mere convenience, as meaning a great deal more than they ever fairly can mean. They are not contracted to involve the liabilities of friendship. If they did they would be inconveniently few. You must not expect people to sacrifice themselves for you, merely because they think you good company or have similar tastes. When you begin the *facilis descensus*, people won't walk with you very far on the way. The most you can expect is a graceful, and sometimes a compassionate, farewell.

It was about a fortnight after poor papa's death that some law papers came, which understanding as little about such matters as most young ladies do, I sent, with mamma's approval, to Mr. Forrester, who, I mentioned, had been poor papa's man of business in town.

Next day he called. I was with mamma in her room at the time; and the servant came up with a little pencilled note. It said, "The papers are important; and the matter must be looked after immediately to prevent unpleasantness." Mamma and I were both startled. "Business," which we had never even heard of before, now met us sternly face to face, and demanded instant attention.

The servant said that Mr. Forrester was waiting in the drawing-room to know whether mamma wished to see him. She asked me to go down instead, which accordingly I did.

As I entered, he was standing looking with a thoughtful and rather disgusted countenance, as if he had something disagreeable to tell, from the window. He came forward and spoke very kindly, and

then told me that the papers were notices to the effect that unless certain mortgages were paid off, upon a certain early day, which was named, the house and furniture would be sold.

He saw how startled I was. He looked very kindly, and as if he pitied me.

"Has your mamma any relation, who understands business, to advise with under her present circumstances?" he asked.

"Chellwood, I think, ought," I began.

"I know. But this will be very troublesome; and they say Lord Chellwood is not a man of business. He'll never undertake it, I'm sure. We can try, if you like; but I think it is merely losing time and a sheet of paper, and he's abroad, I know, at Vichy; for I wrote to him to try to induce him to take an assignment of this very mortgage, and he would not, or said he could not, which means the same thing. I don't think he'll put himself out of his way for anybody. Can you think of no one else?"

"We have very few kinsmen," I answered; "they are too remote, and we know too little about them, to have any chance of their taking any trouble for us."

"But there was a family named Rokestone connected with you at Golden Friars?"

"There is only Sir Harry Rokestone, and he is not friendly. We have reason to know he is very much the reverse," I answered.

"I hope, Miss Ware, you won't think me impertinent, but it is right you should ascertain, without further loss of time, how you stand. There are expenses going on. And all I positively know is that poor Mr. Ware's affairs are left in a very entangled state. Does your mamma know what balance there is in the bank?"

"How much money in the bank?" I repeated. "Papa said there was fifty pounds."

"Fifty pounds! Oh, there must be more than that," he replied, and looked down, with a frown, upon the floor, and, with his hands in his pockets, meditated for a minute or two.

"I don't like acting alone, if it can be helped," he began again; "but if Mrs. Ware, your mamma, wishes it, I'll write to the different professional men, Mr. Jarlcot at Golden Friars, and Mr. Williams at Cardyllion, and the two solicitors in the south of England, and I'll ascertain for her, as nearly as we can, what is left, and how everything stands, and we must learn at the bank what balance stands to your credit. But I think your mamma

should know that she can't possibly afford to live in the way she has been accustomed to, and it will be only prudent and right that she should give all the servants, except two or three whom she can't do without, notice of discharge. Is there a will?"

"I don't know. I think not—mamma thinks not," I said.

"I don't believe there is," he added. "It's not likely, and the law makes as good a will for him as he could have made for himself." He thought for a minute, and then went on. "I felt a great reluctance, Miss Ware, to talk upon these unpleasant subjects; but it would not have been either kind or honest to be silent. You and your mamma will meet your change of circumstances with good sense and good feeling, I am sure. A very great change, I fear, it will be. You are not to consider me as a professional man, tell your mamma. I am acting as a friend. I wish to do all I can to prevent expense, and to put you in possession of the facts as quickly and clearly as I can, and then you will know exactly the case you have to deal with."

He took his leave with the same air of care, thought, and suppressed fuss which belongs to the overworked man of business.

When these people make a present of their time, they are giving us something more than gold. I was not half grateful enough to him then. Thought and years have enabled me to estimate his good nature.

I was standing at the window of a back drawing-room, a rather dark room, pondering on the kind but alarming words, at which, as at the sound of a bell, the curtain seemed to rise for a new act in my life. These worldly terrors were mingling a new poison in my grief. The vulgar troubles, which are the hardest to bear, were near us. At this inopportune moment I heard the servant announce some one, and, looking over my shoulder quickly, I saw Mr. Carmel come in.

I felt myself grow pale. I saw his eye wander for a moment in search, I fancied, of mamma. I did not speak or move.

The mirror reflected my figure back upon myself as I turned toward him. What did he see? Not quite the same Ethel Ware he had been accustomed to. My mourning-dress made me look taller, thinner, and paler than before. I could not have expected to see him; I looked, I suppose, as I felt, excited, proud, pained, resentful.

He came near; his dark eyes looked at me inquiringly; he extended his hand, hesitated, and said:

"I am afraid I did wrong. I ought not to have asked to see you."

"We have not seen any one—mamma or I—except one old friend, who came a little time ago."

My own voice sounded cold and strange in my ear; I felt angry and contemptuous. Had I not reason? I did not give him my hand, or appear to perceive that he had advanced his.

I could see, though I did not look direct at him, that he seemed pained.

"I thought, perhaps, that I had some claim, also, as an old friend," he began, and paused.

"Oh! I quite forgot that," I repeated in the same tones; "an old friend, to be sure." I felt that I smiled bitterly.

"You look at me as if you hated me, Miss Ware," he said; "why should you? What have I done?"

"Why do you ask me? Ask yourself. Look into your conscience. I think, Mr. Carmel, you are the last person who should have come here."

"I won't affect to misunderstand you; you think I influenced Lady Lorrimer," he said.

"The whole thing is coarse and odious," I said. "I hate to speak or think of it; but, shocking as it is, I must. Lady Lorrimer had no near relations but mamma; and she intended—she told her so in my hearing—leaving money to her by her will. It is, I think, natural and right that people should leave their money to those they love—their own kindred—and not to strangers. I would not complain if Lady Lorrimer had acted of her own thought and will in the matter. But it was far otherwise; a lady, nervous and broken in health, was terrified, as death approached, by people, of whom you were one, and thus constrained to give all she possessed into the hands of strangers, to forward theological intrigues, of which she could understand nothing. I say it was unnatural, cruel, and rapacious. That kind lady, if she had done as she wished, would have saved us from all our misery."

"Will you believe me, Miss Ware?" he said, in the lowest possible tones, grasping the back of the chair, on which his hand rested, very hard, "I never knew, heard, or suspected that Lady Lorrimer had asked or received any advice respecting that will, which I see has been publicly criticised in

some of the papers. I never so much as heard that she had made a will; I entreat, Miss Ware, that you will believe me."

"In matters where your Church is concerned, Mr. Carmel, I have heard that prevarication is a merit. With respect to all that concerns poor Lady Lorrimer, I shall never willingly hear another word from you, nor ever speak to you again."

I turned to the window, and looked out for a minute or two, with my fingers on the window-sash.

Then I turned again rather suddenly. He was standing on the same spot in the same attitude, his hands clasped together, his head lowered, his eyes fixed in a reverie on the ground, and I thought I saw the trace of tears on his cheek.

My moving recalled him, and he instantly looked up, and said:

"Let me say a word: whatever sacrifice my holy calling may impose, I accept with gratitude to Heaven. We are not pressed into this service—we are volunteers. The bride at the altar never took vow more freely. We have sworn to obey, to suffer, to fight, to die. Forewarned, and with our eyes open, we have cast all behind us: the vanities, hopes, and affections of mortality, according to the word of God, hating father, mother, sister, brother, we take up the heavy cross, and follow in the blood-stained footsteps of our Master, pressing forward, with blind obedience and desperate stoicism, we smile at hunger, thirst, heat, and cold, sickness, perils, bonds, and death; such soldiers, you are right in thinking, will dare everything but treason. If I had been commanded to withhold information from my dearest friend, to practise any secrecy, or to exert for a given object any influence, I should have done so. All human friendship is subject with me to these inexorable conditions. Is there any prevarication there? But with respect to Lady Lorrimer's will, I suggested nothing, heard nothing, thought nothing."

All this seemed to me very cool. I was angry. I smiled again, and said:

"You must think all that very childish, Mr. Carmel. You tell me you are ready to mislead me upon any subject, and you expect me to believe you upon this."

"Of course that strikes you," he said, "and I have no answer but this; I have no possible motive in deceiving you; all that is past, inexorable, fixed as death itself!"

"I neither know nor care with what purpose you speak. It is clear to me, Mr.

Carmel, that with your principles, as I suppose I must call them, you could be no one's friend; and no one but a fool could be yours. It seems to me you are isolated from all human sympathies; toward such a person I could feel nothing but antipathy and fear; you don't stand before me like a fellow-creature, but like a spirit, and not a good one."

"These principles, Miss Ware, of which you speak so severely, Protestants, the most religious, practise with as little scruple as we, in their warfare, in their litigation, in their diplomacy, in their ordinary business, wherever, in fact, hostile action is suspected. If a Laodicean community were as earnest about winning souls as they are about winning battles, or lawsuits, or money, or elections, we should hear very little of such weak exceptions against the inevitable strategy of zeal and faith."

I made him no answer; perhaps I could not do so at the moment. I was excited; his serene temper made me more so.

"I have described my obligations, Miss Ware," he said. "Your lowest view of them can now charge me with no treachery to you. It is true I cannot be a friend in the sense in which the world reads friendship. My first allegiance is to Heaven; and in the greatest, as in the minutest things, all my obedience is due to that organ of its will, which Heaven has placed above me. If all men thought more justly, such relations would not require to be disclosed or defended; they would simply be taken for granted—reason deduces them from the facts of our faith; we are the creatures of one God, who has appointed one Church to be the interpreter of his will upon earth."

"Every traitor is a sophist, sir; I have neither skill nor temper for such discussions," I answered, proving my latter position very sufficiently. "I had no idea that you could have thought of visiting here, and I hoped I should have been spared the pain of seeing you again. Nor should I like to continue this conversation, because I might be tempted to say even more pointedly what I think than I care to do. Good-bye, Mr. Carmel, good-bye, sir," I repeated, with a quiet emphasis meant to check, as I thought, his evident intention to speak again.

He so understood it. He paused for a moment, undecided, and then said:

"Am I to understand that you command me to come no more?"

"Certainly," I answered, coldly and angrily.

His hand was on the door, and he asked very gently, but I thought with some little agitation:

"And that you now end our acquaintance?"

"Certainly," I repeated, in the same tone.

"Heaven has sent me my share of sorrow," he said; "but no soldier of Christ goes to his grave without many scars. I deserve my wounds, and submit. It must be long before we meet again under any circumstances; never, perhaps, in this life."

He looked at me. He was very pale, and his large eyes were full of kindness. He held out his hand to me silently, but I did not take it. He sighed deeply, and placed it again on the handle of the door, and said, very low:

"Farewell, Miss Ware—Ethel—my pupil, and may God for ever bless you." So the door opened, and he went.

I heard the hall-door shut. That sullen sound smote my heart like a signal telling me that my last friend was gone.

Few people who have taken an irrevocable step on impulse; even though they have done rightly, think very clearly immediately after. My own act for awhile confounded me.

I don't think that Mr. Carmel was formed by nature for deception. I think, in my inmost soul, I believed his denial, and was sure that he had neither act nor part in the management of Lady Lorimer's will. I know I felt a sort of compunction, and I experienced that melancholy doubt as to having been quite in the right, which sometimes follows an angry scene. In this state I returned to mamma to tell her all that had passed.

CHAPTER XL. A RAINY DAY.

MAMMA knew nothing distinctly about the state of our affairs, but she knew something generally of the provision made at her marriage, and she thought we should have about a thousand a year to live upon.

I could hardly recognise the possibility of this, with Mr. Forrester's forebodings. But if that, or even something like it, were secured to us, we could go down to Malory, and live there very comfortably. Mamma's habits of thinking, and the supine routine of her useless life, had sustained a shock, and her mind seemed now to rest with pleasure on the comparative solitude and quiet of a country life.

All our servants, except one or two, were under notice to go. I had also got leave from mamma to get our plate, horses, carriages, and other superfluous things valued, and fifty other trifling measures taken to expedite the winding up of our old life, and our entrance upon our new one, the moment Mr. Forrester should tell us that our income was ascertained, and available.

I was longing to be gone, so also was mamma.

She seemed very easy about our provision for the future, and I, alternating between an overweening confidence and an irrepressible anxiety, awaited the promised disclosures of Mr. Forrester, which were to end our suspense.

Nearly a fortnight passed before he came again. A note reached us the day before, saying that he would call at four, unless we should write in the mean time to put him off. He did come, and I shall never forget the interview that followed.

Mamma and I were sitting in the front drawing-room, expecting him. My heart was trembling. I know of no state so intolerable as suspense upon a vital issue. It is the state in which people in money troubles are, without intermission. How it is lived through for years, as often as it is, and without the loss of reason, is in my eyes the greatest physical and psychological wonder of this sorrowful world.

A gloomier day could hardly have heralded the critical exposition that was to disclose our future lot. A dark sky, clouds dark as coal-smoke, and a steady down-pour of rain, large-dropped and violent, that keeps up a loud and gusty drumming on the panes, down which the wet is rushing in rivers. Now and then the noise rises to a point that makes conversation difficult. Every minute at this streaming window I was looking into the street, where cabs and umbrellas, few and far between, were scarcely discoverable through the rivulets that coursed over the glass.

At length I saw a cab, like a waving mass of black mist, halt at the door, and a double knock followed. My breath almost left me.

In a minute or two the servant, opening the door, said, "Mr. Forrester," and that gentleman stepped into the gloomy room, with a despatch-box in his hand, looking ominously grave and pale.

He took mamma's hand, and looked, I thought, with a kind of doubtful inquiry in her face, as if measuring her strength to bear some unpleasant news. I almost

forgot to shake hands with him, I was so horribly eager to hear him speak.

Mamma was much more confident than I, and said, as soon as he had placed his box beside him, and sat down, "I'm so obliged to you, Mr. Forrester; you have been so extremely kind to us. My daughter told me that you intended making inquiries, and letting us know all you heard; and I hope you think it satisfactory?"

He looked down, and shook his head in silence.

Mamma flushed very much, and stood up, staring at him, and then grew deadly pale.

"It is not—it can't be less—I hope it's not—than nine hundred a year. If it is not that, what is to become of us?"

Mamma's voice sounded hard and stern, though she spoke very low. I, too, was staring at the messenger of fate with all my eyes, and my heart was thumping hard.

"Very far from satisfactory. I wish it were anything at all like the sum you have named," said Mr. Forrester, very dejectedly, but gathering courage for his statement as he proceeded. "I'll tell you, Mrs. Ware, the result of my correspondence, and I am really pained and grieved that I should have such a statement to make. I find that you opened your marriage settlement, except the provision for your daughter, which, I regret to say, is little more than a thousand pounds, and she takes nothing during your life, and then we can't put it down at more than forty pounds a year."

"But—but I want to know," broke in poor mamma, with eyes that glared, and her very lips white, "what there is, how much we have got to live on?"

"I hope from my heart there may be something, Mrs. Ware, but I should not be treating you fairly if I did not tell you frankly that it seems to me a case in which relations ought to come forward."

I felt so stunned that I could not speak.

"You mean, ask their assistance?" said mamma. "My good God! I can't; we can't; I could not do that."

"Mamma," said I, with white lips, "had not we better hear all that Mr. Forrester has to tell us?"

"Allow me," continued mamma, excitedly; "there must be something. Ethel, don't talk folly. We can live at Malory, and, however small our pittance, we must make it do. But I won't consent to beg." Mamma's colour came again as she spoke

this, with a look of haughty resentment at Mr. Forrester. That poor gentleman seemed distressed, and shifted his position a little uneasily.

"Malory," he began, "would be a very suitable place if an income were arranged. But Malory will be in Sir Harry Rokestone's possession in two or three days, and without his leave you could not go there; and I'm afraid I dare not encourage you to entertain any hopes of a favourable, or even a courteous hearing in that quarter. Since I had the pleasure of seeing Miss Ware here, about ten days or a fortnight since, I saw Mr. Jarlcot, of Golden Friars; a very intelligent man he evidently is, and does Sir Harry Rokestone's business in that part of the world, and seemed very friendly; but he says that in that quarter"—Mr. Forrester paused, and shook his head gloomily, looking on the carpet—"we have nothing good to look for. He bears your family, it appears, an implacable animosity, and does not scruple to express it in very violent language indeed."

"I did not know that Sir Harry Rokestone had any claim upon Malory," said mamma; "I don't know by what right he can prevent our going into my house."

"I'm afraid there can be no doubt as to his right as a trustee; but it was not obligatory on him to enforce it. Some charges ought to have been paid off four years ago; it is a very peculiar deed, and, instead of that, interest has been allowed to accumulate. I took the liberty of writing to Sir Harry Rokestone a very strong letter, the day after my last interview with Miss Ware; but he has taken not the slightest notice of it, and that is very nearly a fortnight ago, and Jarlcot seems to think that if he lets me off with silence, I'm getting off very easily. They all seem afraid of him down there."

I fancied that Mr. Forrester had been talking partly to postpone a moment of pain. If there was a shock coming he wanted resolution to precipitate the crisis, and looked again with a perplexed and uneasy countenance on the carpet. He glanced at mamma, once or twice, quickly, as if he had nearly made up his mind to break the short silence that had followed.

While he was hesitating, however, I was relieved by mamma's speaking, and very much to the point.

"And how much do you think, Mr. Forrester, we shall have to live upon?"

"That," said he, looking steadfastly on the table, with a very gloomy countenance,

"is the point on which, I fear, I have nothing satisfactory, or even hopeful," he added, raising his head, and looking a little stern, and even frightened, "to say. You must only look the misfortune in the face, and a great misfortune it is, accustomed as you have been to everything that makes life happy and easy. It is, as I said before, a case in which relations who are wealthy, and well able to do it, should come forward."

"But do say what it is," said mamma, trembling violently. "I shan't be frightened, only say distinctly, is it only four hundred? Or only three hundred a year?" She paused, looking imploringly at him.

"I should be doing very wrong if I told you there was anything—anything like that—anything whatever certain, in fact, however small. There's nothing certain, and it would be very wrong to mislead you. I don't think the assets and property will be sufficient to pay the debts."

"Great Heaven! Sir—oh! oh!—is there nothing left?"

He shook his head despondingly.

The murder was out now; there was no need of any more questioning; no case could be simpler. We were not worth a shilling.

If in my vain and godless days the doctor at my bedside had suddenly told me that I must die before midnight, I could not have been more bewildered. Without knowing what I did, I turned and walked to the window, on which the rain was thundering, and rolling down in rivers. I heard nothing; my ears were stunned.

COMPETITION.

COMPETITION, like most other things the roots of which strike deep into man's heart, is ancient beyond the ken of the historian and the ballad-singer. It springs from primary instincts, and has its origin in the very conditions of our existence. Professor Darwin's bold theory of natural selection would, within certain limits, be admitted by its bitterest opponents to be demonstrably true. Where there is not enough for all, and, it may be added, where no strong restraints of religious scruple or moral discipline prevail, a scramble, in which the weakest are pitilessly thrust to the wall, must ensue. Necessity, in its crudest form, knows but the law of force. "Thou shalt want ere I want," the once famous motto of a cattle-driving Border baron, is in fact a pithy exposition of the stern statutes

which hunger and thirst, heat and cold, impose in a greater or less degree upon the entire animal creation. However inevitable may be the struggle to live, and however nature may urge each and all of us to better his condition, it cannot be denied that all organised systems of society have found themselves at variance with this unsocial instinct. Even savages have long since discovered, what the cunning of the wolves had taught them from the beginning, that it is better to surround the game, and to make a fair division of the spoils of the chase, than for each solitary hunter to go forth against the bison or the elephant. Combination is rendered compulsory by the mutual need of defence against the foe, and of a common maintenance; and accordingly, a tribe must have sunk very low in squalor and famine, or must have risen to the semi-civilisation of the pastoral stage, before we find much inequality prevail among its members. All primitive legislation has had a tendency to repress mere greed, and to insist on fair-play for the feeblest of the community. Some law-givers have been unable to comprehend that there should be any battle of life at all. They have endeavoured, so to speak, to make mankind unselfish, instead of virtuous, by Act of Parliament, and have striven to reduce the human race to the condition of a hive of bees, or a colony of ants, in which no separate interests should prevent all from labouring faithfully for the commonweal.

Cato, doubtless, would have liked to have done for the Romans what Lycurgus of old had done for the Spartans, and to have drilled his Quirites into a stoical army of disciplined patriots, accustomed to the severest self-denial, and stirred by no impulse unconnected with the glory and credit of the senate and the people. It is not often, however, that a proud and warlike race can be brought to accept a regimen of black broth and gymnastics; and many a born martinet, from the days of Justinian to those of Frederick the Great, has reluctantly confessed that humanity was too elastic to be cramped within hard and fast boundaries. Even the Heracleids of Sparta itself presently grew weary of a system that left so little to personal inclination; while elsewhere the chief successes of repressive laws have been won over the obedient natives of Paraguay and Peru, and always at the cost of crushing down the brighter and more fertile intellects of the highly-trained community. The

Mosaic code, on the other hand, contented itself with moderating, to the best of its powers, the too great eagerness of the struggle to be first. It preached justice and mercy; it opposed usury, and forbade harshness towards the debtor; but it never attempted to establish a dead-level of worldly prosperity beyond which no Jew could lawfully pass, nor did it interfere with the legitimate processes of commerce.

The passion for accumulating wealth, in countries where wealth meant power, splendour, and the receipt of homage, was essentially Oriental. It was not for a bare maintenance that those long caravans of sun-scorched traders — Pagan, Buddhist, Jewish, and Mahometan — have for uncounted ages made their painful way across desert and mountain. Selim, or Ishmael, or Hulaku, as he plods behind his laden camels over endless stretches of burning sands, confronting dangers that might appal a soldier, and enduring hardships that would do credit to an anchorite, is nerved by the hope of growing rich, among those with whom riches imply even more than they do with us. It is precisely the high place at the feast, the civility of the powerful, the adulation of the poor, that he covets. He wants to chat with the *cadi*, and to spread his praying-carpet in the grand mosque, under the very pulpit whence his good friend the *ulema* will call out the names and titles of the reigning sultan. When he rides by on his white ass, it will be his pleasure to see the salaams of the multitude, and to hear the murmur of fluent adulation with which the beggars of the bazaar will praise him for their share of broken meats from his table. It is well, he thinks, always to be able to afford snow with one's sherbet, and to hire or buy a skilled cook to prepare pilaff and sweet-meats for the veiled Leilas and Fatimas of the harem; but dearer still is the voice of praise, and the delicious sensation that he can make or mar the fortunes of those who are humbler than himself—that he can help a friend or crush an enemy.

The comparative rarity, in Asia, of great national wars, has probably contributed to encourage that extraordinary activity of the Eastern men of the mart compared with which that of our own early traffickers appears tame indeed. Centuries before the Hanse League arose, and while as yet a Venetian keel had not left its glittering wake on the dark green waters of the Adrian sea, caravans of turbaned traders annually penetrated into Equatorial Africa,

and as regularly faced the snow storms and salt storms of the Persian and Bucharian wilds. But then the potency of a well-filled money-bag was but as yet imperfectly recognised in Europe. The blast of the battle-trumpet filled the ears of men with its brazen clangour, and made them deaf to the seductive chink of heaped-up gold. Here, at home with us, the fighting man monopolised all honours save only the scholastic laurels that girt the furrowed brows of some metaphysical preacher, such as the Angelic Doctor or the eloquent lover of Heloise. A martial aristocracy of chivalric slaveholders kept up the tradition that the best lance, the manslayer the most in fashion, was to be considered as the mirror of the age and the cynosure of humanity. Among Paynim Turks and miscreant Moors the merchant had come into high honour long before the half-mythical Whittington feasted his king at Guildhall. Where all fought in defence of a beleaguered city, but where none, save the robbers of the desert, made war a trade, the charms of wealth were likely to become apparent much earlier than in lands where a strong arm and a firm seat were the principal titles to popular distinction.

Gradually as soldiership grew more and more professional, and the expense of warfare, and consequently the need of war's sinews, increased, a fairer field opened itself throughout Christendom for the acquirement of what money can buy. It was found out, certainly by the time of Edward the Third of England, that the richest king could sweep the chess-board of war. Thrifty Louis the Eleventh did more for France than that superb insolent Francis the First, or even than his magnificent namesake the Fourteenth Louis. Our own Edward the Third glitters down the page of history with a lustre that blinds most readers to the fact, that his French wars and the splendour of his court were ruinously expensive to the nation, while frugal Henry the Seventh, with his treasury gorged with savings, and ruling economically over a country which competent foreign observers pronounced to surpass all others in solid prosperity, cuts but a sorry figure beside his picturesque predecessor of the battlefield and tournament.

By Elizabeth's time the lesson that money is power had been thoroughly got by heart, and England, Holland, and, to a less degree France, went mad upon the subject of acquiring, by fair means or by foul, a share in the golden harvest which Spain was

reaping from the small seed which those few pinks and caravels of Isabella's lending had enabled Columbus to sow in the discovery of the wonderful Western Indies. Chroniclers of the last Tudor reign express in quaintly vigorous English their reprobation of the sudden mania for quickly growing rich which had infected even the squirearchy of England, a class hard to move from its habitual groove. Gentlemen, so the gossiping historian piteously remarked, made themselves tanners, grocers, maltsters, smiths, nay, butchers, for the love of lucre. They thought, like Vespasian, that coin, however got, smelt sweet enough. They dabbled in all sorts of strange speculations. Not content with their home ventures, the more enterprising of them planted petty colonies on the shores of the New World, soon to be cut off by the sword of the Spaniard, or to perish miserably by hunger and disease, by domestic brawls, and the arrows of the Indians. As pirates, at least by proxy, they earned an unenviable renown, to which we owe in great part the early excellence of our national navy. But all this feverish grasping at wealth was due to the ardent competition for place, power, luxury, and all the pleasant things that money brings in its train. The neck of the feudal system was at last utterly broken. Gold was supplanting steel, and the question now was how many pounds sterling of annual revenue could be relied on, not how many vassals would muster when the banner should be given to the wind.

Mediæval law and custom had attempted to regulate competition rather than to abolish it. And the precise shape which legislation took was to transfer the struggle from the individual to the body corporate. The guild of weavers, and not that insignificant unit, Simon Thrum, dealt with the pretensions of customers, prentices, and journeymen. The grocers had their price for all the toothsome wares they drew from the far Ind and the unknown Spice Islands, and woe to the false brother who sold his sugar and his saffron for less than Grocerdom had decreed. Every corporation was a club, difficult of access, and governed on the principle of the greatest profit for the smallest number. This was a thing completely in tune with middle-aged views of right and wrong. Individuality was indeed as little encouraged under the feudal system as it is in a society of Shakers. No one being supposed to belong to himself, it seemed disgraceful for one little lonely Jack Horner to pick over many plums out

of his exclusive pie. But a convent of monks, an art and mystery of cordwainers or merchant-tailors, an order of knights, could do, without much blame, what any one man would have been censured for doing, and could arrange, for the common benefit, a pacific crusade against the pockets of the profane vulgar. It was not until one tottering fragment of the mouldering fortress of privilege had gone down to dusty ruin after another, that the principle of a fair field and no favour became entitled to even theoretical toleration.

That competition has its merits is plain enough. It is, as a keen-edged axe, potent to clear away the foul growth of that jungle of abuses which monopoly always fosters. Once that that active element is eliminated from human affairs, we find vested interests of the most monstrous kind start up to clog every avenue in life. Future generations will marvel at the patience with which their progenitors bore with the Six Clerks, fattening on fabulous fees for the obstruction of business; with the Palace Court, of which the judge and his deputy, the six attorneys and four counsel, were joint proprietors; and of scores of other anomalies, from clerks of the hanaper to functionaries by far more important. Just so do we wonder that the sovereigns of France and Spain, in the plenitude of despotic power, were yet slaves to their own volunteer servants; that a duke could buy the right to help majesty on with its embroidered coat, and a marchioness inherit the privilege of offering rouge and pearl-powder at the elaborate toilette of a queen.

Among the other results of the world-shaking revolution in which France took the lead, not the least notable was the extraordinary development of competition. All prices rose, as the standard of comfort was raised, and new industries, undreamed of before, came into being as by the bidding of a good fairy, or the flourish of a magic wand. In England, in South Germany, in France, whole classes of the population insisted on being better fed and clothed than had previously been the case. There was a tacit revolt against the black rye loaf, the porridge, the skim-milk cheese. Jacques Bonhomme suddenly renounced the meal of roasted chestnuts; Hans of Hesse craved to dine on something better than unripe potatoes and oatcake; honest Hodge formed a life-and-death alliance with the white loaf which had formerly figured only on the table of the farmer whose fields he

ploughed. Agriculture, freed from the short-sighted restrictions of those who cared more for the game than the crops, rapidly improved on both sides of the Rhine, and the surplus of the rustic population flowed into the cities where new manufactures required a supply of labour. Gradually competition seemed to reach, especially in countries where the English speech prevailed, its zenith. The passage from one rank to another became comparatively frequent and easy, while distinctions of dress became daily less marked, as silk and velvet, lace and gold thread, were no longer opposed at one of the social poles to the frieze and fustian which had belonged to the other.

There have always been minds to which there was something shocking and unwelcome in all this striving and scrambling for the biggest portion of the world's benefits. Many a teacher would fain have suppressed the restless greediness of the aspirants, and substituted more unselfish aims for the mere instinct to rise over the heads of others. The same sentiment inspires trade unions, and dominates in the councils of the International Society. Hogarth's industrious apprentice, that model young man who perfected himself in his trade and married his master's daughter, would be astonished to find himself scouted as a deserter, or eyed askance as a self-seeking egotist by many not unintelligent working men of the present day. It is all very well to say that the worthy young fellow rose in life by strictly moral means, but the question would now be put, in all seriousness, as to the apprentice's right to rise in life at all. In other words, a strong undercurrent of public opinion has now set in, hostile to personal ambition even of a virtuous kind, and which insists on regarding the world, not as a racecourse on which the palm of victory is justly awarded to the winner, but rather as a desert across which all should march at a pace adapted to the strength of the weaker members of the company, equally dividing, meanwhile, the store of provisions which are to sustain them on the road. From this point of view the arbitrary rules that govern many trades, the prejudice against piecework, the prohibition of "chasing," seem no longer capricious, based though they undoubtedly are on an economical fallacy. Once assume, what many are ready to take for granted, that the possible amount of work and wages is fixed within hard and fast limits, and we can understand that the good workman,

the clever mechanic who gets through his task with deft rapidity, is regarded by his companions pretty much as would be a soldier whose inordinate appetite led him to devour his comrades' rations in addition to his own. How wasteful and how erroneous such a practical belief may be, Blue Books and familiar experience unite to tell us; but it is useless to deny its existence, or that it comes into frequent collision with the most powerful motives that can induce men to struggle up the rounds of the social ladder.

Purely honorary distinctions exercise a very varying influence in stimulating those before whom is put the chance of winning them. Grown men, broadly speaking, are more alive to their value than children are. The studious boy who proudly glances at the brilliant bindings, all gold and Russia leather, of the many presentation volumes which he has brought home to grace his father's bookshelves; the quick-witted schoolgirl who weeps passionately because, after months of toil, that odious Cecilia Sapper has carried off the French prize, these two old friends of our youth, common in print, are very rarely to be met with in the flesh. The average of public schoolboys do their best at cricket, or rowing, or football, because proficiency in athletics of any sort is really a claim on the suffrages of a gymnastic generation; but it would require a persuasive tongue, indeed, to make yonder lads in flannels and bright-coloured caps believe that the narrow-chested hard-working boy who has a portmanteau full of prize-books is in any way comparable to Sampson Senior, who made seventy-nine runs against the best bowling of the county, or to young Light-foot, who got to the finish of his one mile race in four minutes and forty-seven seconds.

At the universities, where the tree of knowledge bears Hesperian fruit, in the form of scholarships and fellowships, and professional chairs, and fat college livings, it is not surprising that some midnight petroleum should be burned, some exertions made, to secure them. There is solid pudding to be earned by perseverance, as well as the less substantial commodity of praise. The wonder rather is that more striplings are not tempted by steady work to insure a moderate competence out of the crumbs that fall from the table of learning. But public opinion sets in the opposite direction, and its edicts are imperative indeed when addressed to those whom

their position on the threshold of man's estate, so to speak, renders peculiarly sensitive to the judgment of those with whom they live. The amiable superstition that every double-first was certain of parliamentary prestige and high preferment, that a senior wrangler was synonymous with a sucking attorney-general or a future bishop, has long faded into the limbo of day-dreams. Now-a-days there is only too much inclination to ignore the utility of great classical or mathematical attainments; and although it is admitted that some statesmen of the first rank have been university prizemen, few of their successors care to seek the bubble reputation through the medium of Greek iambics, or of sines and quotients. It is not merely that muscle is in high demand, and that the stroke of the best racing eight, the champion cricketer, the Thor of hammer-throwing contests, is now a hero artlessly to be worshipped, but that the emoluments to be earned by learning fall so very far behind what is daily won by hard-headed commercial shrewdness and knowledge of the world.

Curiously enough, men of mature age are more easily stirred to put forth their full powers by the hope of obtaining some sparkling gewgaw, a ribbon, a star, a title, a few magic letters to be printed after the name, than would be the case with their juniors. The withered heart of some elderly diplomatist will flutter at the prospect of a grand cross or a royal miniature set in diamonds, like that of a young girl on the eve of her first ball. Grim, white-moustached veterans of the Old Guard used to weep when the man in the loose grey riding-coat, the little three-cornered historical hat, and well-worn black boots, rode up to pin the decoration of the Legion on the breast of their shabby, war-stained uniforms. Highly respectable citizens, in all countries, pine and canvass, and lay their little innocent plots, for the coveted honour of being mayor, or town councillor, or churchwarden, and after years of long-ing perhaps find the game to have been hardly worth the candle. That a minister of state should appear an enviable being is natural enough. He is fairly paid; his high place, and his presumed acquaintance with the deepest political secrets, give a weight to his lightest utterances; he is in daily communion with the great ones of the earth; and, above all, he has some power, and is credited with ten times more than he really has. But the couch of

roses on which these Olympians lie are not exempt from thorns. Apart from the sharp criticism of party foes, and the unsparing comments of the press, every one of the helmsmen who undertake to steer the good ship of the commonweal must be painfully alive to the fact, that he cannot do a tithe for his friends of what those friends deem themselves to have a right to. Great indeed is the resentment that rankles in many a gentle breast, as Tommy, or poor Jack, or aspiring Arthur, remains unprovided for, although the Right Honourable Francis Fairservice, on whose arm Tommy's, or Arthur's, or Jack's mammas have often gone down to dinner, is in proud possession of a crimson despatch-box in Downing-street or Whitehall. It is vain to tell the murmurers that the much-abused Secretary for Singular Affairs is harassed to death with similar applications; that head clerks must be consulted and meritorious subordinates promoted; that some regard to qualifications is prescribed by official decorum. It is to no purpose thus to reason. Nothing can do away with the fact that every distributor of ministerial loaves and fishes will have to send four-fifths of the expectants empty-handed away.

Competitive examinations, if not regarded as a perfect panacea for all earthly ills, as was almost the case when they were in the first flush of their triumphant progress, must beyond doubt have opened the door to many deserving candidates whom Britannia would never otherwise have numbered among her public servants. They have also lightened the burden of ministerial responsibility, since so few posts are now in the direct gift of a member of the official hierarchy. But much the same results seem likely to follow their adoption among ourselves that attended their establishment, ages ago, in China. There is nothing new under the sun, and while inequalities of fortune exist, money will assert itself, even in a fair and free competition for the greatest number of marks. Most of the mandarins, though by no means all, were the sons either of members of the literary aristocracy of China, or of her merchant-princes. There are excellent schools, to which the humblest can get access, and so qualify for a share in the government of the Central Kingdom. But to live it is necessary to eat; a boy's labour is of value to his family; the same influences which remove little Dick and Harry prematurely from the national school to earn

fourpence or sixpence in the fields, are active in far Kathay. Very clever, or very plodding youths, may and do go gloriously through the whole curriculum of Confucian philosophy, of poetry, and science, and so die as satraps squeezing wealth from vast provinces, and envied wearers of the round red coral button of the loftiest grade. But in general the successful are those who have had tutors and teachers from infancy, to whose hands the paint-brush has been familiar ever since they began to explore the portentous pictorial alphabet, and who lisped in numbers because the flowery versification of the class to which they belonged was as vital air to them.

The contest of the crammers and the examiners has been almost as interesting, and probably as arduous, as the perennial duel between ships and guns. Just as it is all but impossible to construct a lock which some other cunning artificer cannot pick, so it appears hopeless to devise a system of questions that shall test the sterling stuff of which competitors are made, without reference to the cut-and-dried information with which they have been supplied. Change after change may be made, surprise after surprise attempted, but the ingenuity of the scholastic wire-pullers is equal to the occasion. The disgusted examiner, confident in his precautions, gradually recognises the truth that he is not conversing with George Griffin, junior, but with Doctor or Mr. Varnish, M.A., who has a string of honorary capitals appended to the name that heads his prospectus, who speaks all languages, knows something of everything, and is growing rich apace by preparing young gentlemen for the civil and military service of their country. Mr. Griffin is there in the body, certainly, with his pink ears and heated forehead, and his preceptor is as undoubtedly absent, but, nevertheless, Mr. Examiner cannot but feel that all his well-meant efforts are as thoroughly baffled as if the young man were a medium, and Mr. Varnish held him under some as yet unknown mesmeric influence. There is no getting at the lad's real brain, no finding out what he will be when he shall at no distant date have forgotten Varnish and all his works. As it is, that subtle instructor of youth has armed him at all points. He is a pattern pupil, and has absorbed exactly such information—and no more—as will help him well through the ordeal that lies before him. If caught tripping on one subject, he is comfortably bolstered up on all the rest, and as the defeated examiner

grudgingly sends in his name at the top of the list, he is forced to acknowledge with a sigh that Varnish is a very clever fellow. So he is, but services like his are very costly luxuries, and if any class of men derive direct benefits from competition, there is little doubt that Mr. Varnish and his compeers are of the number.

THE GODS OF THE HEARTH.

ONLY a picture, dimmed and smirched
By many a weary year.
Only a plant, with a rugged stem,
Its scant leaves frail and sere.
Only a book, its pages torn,
Its dainty binding stained.
Only a harp, with its music jarred,
Its strings all dumb and strained.
Only a phrase, that strikes the ear,
As awkward, dull, or cold.
Only a ring, with its jewel flawed,
And rust on its tarnished gold.

Yet, that portrait stirs one secret heart,
As no masters' work can do.
Those flowers for one outbloom all buds,
Of royal scent and hue.
No poet's golden utterance
Charms as those pages did.
No lute has melody half so sweet,
In its measured cadence hid.
Those rough frank words a courtly phrase,
Sounds scarce so dear or true.
No sapphire shrines the glow that once,
The poor pale turquoise knew.

The Gods of the Hearth they reign supreme
On the altar of the heart.
Life flashes on its varying way,
Each takes his destined part.
The wheel revolves, the sunlights glint,
Storms roar, and quick rains fall.
The thorns grow thick on the rose's stem,
Death strikes, to end it all;
But oh it is only his mighty hand
That can hurl them from their throne;
The Gods that Home, and Heart, and Hearth,
In Love unite to own.

LOLA. AN IDYL.

THE house was one of the nest-like sort, low-roofed, thatched, with latticed windows buried in greenery, with a dove-cote on the gable, and rustic porch and veranda. It stood in a forest country, and, with its garden, orchard, and scraps of velvety pasturage, was surrounded on many sides by trees climbing on heights, trees dipping and curtsying in hollows, trees wading into the river where the red-sided cattle loved to drink, trees lying in soft heaps against the silver greys of cloudland with a mysterious blue mist behind their boles.

The morning glitter was on everything as the master of the house, going out with his dog, stopped and spoke over the low garden wall to his wife, who, with hands

in her apron-pockets, was standing gazing attentively at her bee-hives.

"Let Fan have the satin for this time, but she must try to do with less. Our living is too expensive."

"I have just been thinking of where we can economise," replied the wife in an irritated tone. "We are too many in the house for one thing. It is time that girl Lola was earning her bread."

"Humph!" said the husband; "I think she earns it already. She saves you a nursery governess."

"I can teach the children myself," was the reply, "and their sisters must learn to help. Lola gets nothing from us but food and shelter. It would be only fair to let her go into the world."

"She's a shy thing, and is better where she is. Besides, what would become of Granny's children?"

The husband and wife had walked slowly from the bee-hives to the house, and stood under a lattice window, which lay open.

"Talking of Granny," said the husband, "how long is Gray going to stay at Rose-lands? He's a good deal here, isn't he?"

"He's very pleasant company."

"And our girls are attractive."

"Nonsense! How little you know of your own children! I have brought up my girls to have their feelings under prudent control. There is no mistake about his footing in this family."

"Well, I'm glad you are all so prudent, for he'd be the better of a good wife. He's a good fellow, and a clever fellow, though poor as Job."

The porch swallowed the mistress of the house, and the master went off whistling; and then a face leaned forward and looked out of the lattice window, pale, but with a sort of under glow, giving a warm charm to its dimpled softness, with darkness and depth about the eyes, and brightness about the hair which the sunshine now illuminated with a genius for love in every curve of it, and a sort of golden light wavering across the steady eyes and grave though happy mouth.

"Thank God I am not a young lady!" murmured Lola, taking her fingers out of her ears, where she had placed them all too late. "What would they think if they knew what he said to me yesterday?"

She rose up quivering at the recollection, nearly touching the slant roof with her head in her pride. The room was dark, and scarcely large enough to hold Lola and a glass of flowers and some woodcuts

framed with plaited twigs on the dimly-lighted walls.

"He'd be the better of a good wife," said Lola, echoing the words that had come up to her through the ivy, "but he's poor as Job, and so the fine ladies leave him to me. I wonder what it would be like, being a good wife to a man as poor as Job. There would be a good deal of scrubbing and rubbing, I dare say; but I'm ready for it if I'm wanted. Thank Heaven I am not delicate!" feeling her firm pliant wrists with her clasping fingers. "I'd as soon cook the dinner as do worsted work any day. It's well I have no elegant tastes; making common things look pretty is the finest I have. I have rather a good appetite" (ruefully), "but then I could live on bread and milk. I can cook; I can wash; and I can make clothes. The smallest, tiniest cottage, an easy-chair and a plain one; wine for him, milk for me; an evening lamp, bookcase, garden, good humour, plenty of flowers——"

Lola's thoughts wandered away, and lost themselves in the delights of the home she was sketching. She shook herself out of her dream with a low laugh of undoubting happiness. "Chicks will be waiting—Granny will scold!" She adjusted her white calico dress, plucked a crimson rose that was hanging over the sash, and fixed it, with artistic fingers, in her bosom, smoothed a wilful ripple out of her shining hair, took a sun-burned straw hat from a peg on the wall, and went out of the small chamber, and out of the house.

Granny's house was handsomer than that nest-like one in which Lola lived on sufferance. Granny was not rich, but she liked to keep up a certain old-fashioned grandeur. Indeed, none of these people in this forest country considered themselves as people who were certainly poor. Granny must have trips to London, and two horses in her carriage, and her son, who lived in the nest-house, would have been very well off only that Fan must have her satin dress, and he his hunters. Lola was the richest of them all, with her little lodging for nothing under the ivy, and her slender wage for teaching two small orphan cousins, whom Granny had taken to herself. Lola was the only one amongst them who knew how to enjoy her life.

Lola's way lay through a green lane, across fields, over the river on a rustic bridge, and then plunged into a wood, through a blue tunnel hollowed among

leaves, where the path was moist and brown with dew. Then she entered Rose-lands, which deserved its name, and went into the house with the perfume of thousands of roses hanging about her. Granny was a wilful old lady, who loved lilac ribbons in her cap, and old china in her cabinets, and who could scold and pet little people, and sometimes big people too. She was somewhat severe upon grown-up young folks, unless they happened to get sick, when she became an angel. Arthur Gray was an invalid when she first made his acquaintance, and people said this was why she took such a fancy to him. He was a son of a distant connexion of the family, dropped by chance into their lives—clever, poor, and with no friends. The ladies hearing he was scientific, had at first stood a little in awe of him, with an idea that science is uncomfortable; but Gray had been presented to Granny by the most famous scientific man in London. We do not say that Granny would not have been kind to him if she had picked him up in the gutter, yet the great man had his weight when he did choose to step into the scale of the young man's chances of finding favour among his kinsfolk.

Granny was sitting in her dainty antique drawing-room at the head of a table drawn up in a cool corner under the shade of green blinds, her work-basket before her, her children on either side with open books, and Arthur Gray at the foot of the table, pencil in hand. He was now no longer an invalid, and was supposed to be pluming his wings for some wonderful flight in the regions of scientific discovery. By the sidelong looks of awe which Granny was casting towards him over the rims of her spectacles, she evidently thought he was at this moment deep in some abstruse calculation; but he was only scribbling faces in his pocket-book. He had a broad, square brow, and troubled eyes, and a mouth which betrayed a character resolute and tender. He was a man who had a great future before him—of hard toil, heartache, and fame.

Lola was late. Granny pointed to the timepiece, and the lessons began. Lola's voice was low in asking the questions, and the children's tones were shrill in giving the answers. Granny rapped with her knitting-needle on the table when things were not going so as to please her. Arthur Gray remained for the study, and his study was Lola's face. Lola's voice grew lower, and Granny's raps fell fast upon the

board. Arthur Gray suddenly got up, and left the room.

He walked out on a terrace, and paced up and down. Life was at this moment a tangled skein to him. He wanted to have for his own that sweet woman in-doors who was teaching the children, yet how was he to have her without blighting his career? Marriage meant poverty, struggling, uncongenial drudgery, and Arthur had had enough of it from childhood up. Genius was stirring within him; opportunity, at this moment, lay invitingly before him. He held in his hand a letter which invited him to join a scientific expedition to the other side of the world. A few months ago such an offer would have been hailed as the realisation of his sweetest dreams. But now there was Lola. Success, power, fame, all to be swept away by a woman's hand. Only this morning, as he sat scribbling at the table, he had declared to himself that the thing was monstrous, that it could not be; but Lola had walked into the room, and he had felt at once that it would be easier to walk hand in hand with her instantly into the valley of death, than to set out on any sunny path to fortune, leaving her behind.

He was nowhere to be seen when Lola and the children came out of Granny's house, and ran off towards the woods. The children from the next house met them with dinner in their bags: for this was to be an out-door holiday, while the elders of both families dined with a neighbouring magnate of the land. The children were wild with glee, Lola less wild than was usual on such occasions. The children tried to light a fire to roast their chestnuts, but failed, and Lola lay in the grass, her hat tilted over her mouth and eyes, and listened to the happy humming of the insects. The children cheered suddenly, the breeze blew Lola's hat aside, and here was Arthur Gray coming to join them.

This was like one of the old primeval days when the Garden of Eden bloomed, and before sorrow came into the world. Gray made a great fire, and screened it with thick boughs, so that the sun could not put it out. The children shrieked with delight, the chestnuts hissed and spluttered, the thrushes sang, the quail away in the meadows below sent up a satisfied comment on the state of things, and the lilies flapped their golden wings wantonly down in the river. The purple distance that girdled the forest world looked as inviting as the beautiful future

which young eyes see in dreams. The sunshine reddened on the boles of the trees, and on two faces that leaned towards each other often across the heads of the children. Dinner was eaten in the grass, with dock-leaves for dishes, and Arthur Gray told stories to the children about wonderful places and things which are to be found on this moving globe; showed them glittering caves in the heart of the earth, deserts with a fierce sun brooding over their blighted flats, and a flying camel carrying dark-faced men and women out of reach of a burning death, and, again, regions where the stars glitter big above mountains of ice, and the white bears wander from block to block of snow in the lonely seas. The children listened with bated breath. Had Mr. Gray seen these places? Should he ever see them? No, he thought not; he should never see them now. Yet that letter from the band of explorers burned unanswered against his heart.

Twilight came, and the little forest party went home for schoolroom tea. As they walked through the tunnel of leaves the children ran on before to have the kettle boiling, and Lola and Gray walked through the purple hollow, alone together. They did not speak much, but walked close together, hand in hand, slowly, and with full hearts. Arthur thought of nothing but that Lola's hand was in his; Lola thought of nothing but that he had taken that hand, and it could help him. As they turned from the shade into the open space lighted by a last glaring reflection from the vanished sun, a gorgeous troop of moving clouds was sailing along the horizon, purple and crimson-edged, upon a sea of gold. They had taken a shape like the pleasure-galley of some ancient Eastern queen, and floated solemnly, as if to music not heard on earth. Something like this was suggested to Lola's mind as the lovers stood still to look, but Arthur saw only the expedition, sailing away without him to shores unknown. For now he had made up his mind indeed. Let them go, said Arthur Gray; he would have Lola for his wife.

Next day, when the young governess went to Roselands to give the lessons, Arthur was already on his way to London to explain to his exploring friends that he could not join their party. He would arrange some matters of business, and return to the forest country and ask Lola to be his wife. He thought he knew well

what she would answer. There was only one woman in the world who would venture to share his poverty, but she was the only woman he wanted, for she was Lola. When the girl arrived at Granny's house she found the old lady walking up and down the path with a gold-headed stick and a large parasol, and a face of much unusual perturbation.

"I have given the children a holiday, and they are making hay in the meadow," said Granny to Lola. "I am going to have a talk with you. I have got at last," she continued, "what I have long been seeking for you, a situation in Paris, where you may see a little of the world, and improve yourself in French. For a girl who has to earn her bread such improvements are desirable, and you cannot go on expensive trips as your cousins can. I have a letter here from the gentleman who engages you. He will wait for you till to-morrow, when you must join him."

Lola's cheeks had become white. She reflected for a few moments, and then raised her eyes gravely to the old lady's face, saying:

"I cannot go."

"Now, Lola, listen to me. You are only a connexion of this family. I have always treated you as if you were my grandchild, and if I could have done more for you I should have been glad, but I am too poor."

"I should not have accepted more," said Lola.

"Don't be pert, miss, with your shoulds and cannots. I have some questions to ask of you. Arthur Gray has gone to London. Do you know what his business is?"

"No," said Lola.

"Is it possible that he has asked you to marry him?"

"No."

"But he has done just the same, and you expect that he will ask you when he comes back?"

"Yes," said Lola.

"And you won't go away to earn your bread because you are waiting to be a millstone round a poor man's neck? You are resolved to wreck completely all the hopes he had cherished before he met you?"

A dreadful look had come into the young girl's eyes; she put her hand dizzily to her head.

"You silly child, don't you see that he is a poor man; no one could be poorer except yourself. If he were an ordinary

man this ought to deter you, for he would have to toil in a way you know little about to give you bread to eat. He is not a common man, but with a great career before him, that is, if you, a chit of a girl, do not step in to spoil it. He is too generous to tell you this perhaps, but I have no scruple in hurting you when it ought to be done."

"Tell me about his career," said Lola.

"The great person who introduced me to him in London," continued Granny, "said to me, 'This will be a distinguished man in a few years hence, if he only regains his health, and keeps himself free of encumbrances. I shall keep an eye on his career and push him onward if I can.' Gray talked to me about it during our journey down here; told me all his hopes while I was petting and taking care of him. I said, 'You must beware of a foolish marriage.' 'The worst thing that could happen to me,' was his answer. 'I hope you have nothing dangerous down in your country?' I remembered only my grand-daughters, and that they were a great deal too sensible to take any interest in him. I never thought of you at all, child; yet here you are doing the mischief, being neither wise for your own interests, nor generous in looking to his. You have ruined him so completely that he is gone to refuse an offer which would have given him fame and fortune had you not been in the way."

"What is that offer?" asked Lola.

"An expedition is sailing next week to the North Pole, or somewhere thereabouts. What they are going to do I am not sure about; but they are scientific men, and they have induced Arthur Gray to be of their party. A few short weeks ago he would have looked upon any one who had prevented his accepting this as an enemy. Now he goes to London to refuse it, in order that he may pin himself to drudgery and obscurity for life; that he may live in repining over what you have selfishly forced upon him, he being far too generous to disappoint you."

Lola did not answer a word, but stood with her face turned away, looking into the forest; then slowly turned away and began walking like a sleep-walker towards an opening in the trees. Granny looked after her angrily, too full of Arthur's wrongs to have any pity for the girl whom she counted his enemy. "An obstinate monkey," she said to herself, wrathfully, and muttered her way back to the house, while Lola spent two long hours alone in the forest. Only the trees, and the river,

and the singing grass saw her struggle; when she came back to Granny her face looked grey and old.

"I will join the gentleman to-night," she said, "and go to Paris with him."

Now that Granny was triumphant, a new feeling of pity came into her heart. But she knew she had done her duty, and that Lola was behaving well. She patted the girl on the shoulder, and sent her home to pack up her things, and made vague promises in her own mind that something good must certainly be done for Lola.

When Gray came back from London, there was no Lola in the forest country, and Granny explained to him how prudently the girl had acted.

"You could not expect of her that she would not seize a good offer when it presented itself," she said. "It is very well for men when women are found with a little common sense. She will have advantages in Paris, and will make a good marriage. Lola is a wise girl, and as for you, you will get over it."

"Certainly," said Arthur, "he would not interfere with any woman's prospects."

And then he also went alone into the forest, and complained that the world had never seen a faithful woman. The grass sighed again, and a smile curled the edges of the leaves of the trees, but not a thing hinted to him of Lola's sacrifice. That night he was again in London, and the next day he sailed with the expedition. As he looked over the ship's side, ambitious hopes rose in his heart, and subdued the pain that would have lingered still. The sea-foam gathered over the past of a few months. The sun of the old world set brilliantly upon what lay behind him; a summer dream, blue mists, dancing trees, sunny idleness, children's voices, and a woman's face framed in the purple shadow among leaves.

A CRITICAL MEETING.

A REMINISCENCE OF NORWAY.

"WELL, K., old fellow, to go or not to go, that is the question!"

"To go, of course. We shall hardly get a finer day for it, if we wait till Christmas; and if we start in an hour it'll just bring us back in good time for supper."

Time, seven o'clock on a glorious July morning; place, a little fishing hamlet on the coast of Norway, somewhat to the north of Throndhjem; dramatis personæ,

my friend Harry Flutterby and myself; question under consideration, a projected voyage across the fjord, to picnic upon a hitherto unvisited islet.

"All right," says Harry, "go it is, then. So, if you'll just see about breakfast, I'll step out and look after the boat."

"And while you're about it," suggest I, "just see if there are any letters for us; I see old Sigmund toddling along the edge of the fjord yonder."

"To hear is to obey," answers Harry; and away he strides at his usual tremendous pace, as if bent upon imitating that energetic giant who "walked round the world before breakfast every morning to get up an appetite."

Harry Flutterby was one of those lucky people who are styled as if by common consent "the best fellows in the world," and seem privileged to do what they please without fear of offence. A popular writer, a first-rate gymnast, an experienced traveller, an irresistibly jolly companion, he seemed made to be liked by everybody; and so he was. Indeed, he was popularly believed to have but one enemy, though that one (in poor Harry's opinion at least) fully atoned for the absence of others. I was already tired of hearing him quote, in his fits of effervescent vindictiveness:

*Der Wallfisch hat doch seine Laus,
Muss auch die meine haben.*

Harry was no Homer; but he had found a Zoilus in the person of a certain Mr. Frederick Slasher, critic-in-ordinary to the Draco, who waylaid and butchered poor Harry's literary bantlings as they issued from the press with a mercilessness worthy of Richard the Third. Indeed, one of my friend's chief reasons for joining me in our present trip was the desire of escaping for a little while from the sting of this gad-fly; but (as the Mahometan says) "no man can avert his destiny." I have barely completed my preparations for breakfast when I am startled by a furious stamping in the room below, and a blast of malediction that makes the crazy timbers rattle again. The next moment Harry comes flying up-stairs like a whirlwind, and flings an open letter on the table.

"There's that cursed fellow at it again, by Jove!" he roars, "and then to think of some beast actually cutting it out and sending it to me just when I was hoping for a little peace." Here the orator becomes incoherent from excess of emotion.

I pick up the extract, and find that it is

as I expected—Zoilus is at work again. I am beginning to glance through it when Harry, too furious to remain passive, snatches it from my hands, and shouting, "Just listen to this!" reads as follows:

"Mr. Flutterby's heroes are all of one type; men made up of all the aristocratic virtues, and more than all the aristocratic vices, half Rochester and half Camelford, carrying all known authors in their mouths, and all known crimes on their consciences, and happily combining the manners of Sir Charles Grandison with the conversation of La Rochefoucauld and the morality of Charles the Second; men who shoot a friend, or pick up a lady's glove with equal grace and self-possession, and alternate between criticising Goethe in the drawing-rooms of Grosvenor-square and thrashing prize-fighters in the taverns of Jermyn-street. Nor are these gentlemen's love affairs less extraordinary than themselves. The wrong man attached to the wrong woman, the wrong woman attracted by the wrong man, cross each other like the links of a daisy chain; and the series usually terminates in some cold and self-contained stoic, who is 'dead to love for evermore.' Indeed, the way in which such matters are arranged reminds us of nothing so much as the position of the Yankee sailors in the great storm, who 'stood in single file holdin' each other's hair on—only the hindmost critter was bald, and so didn't need it!' And as if matters were not complicated enough already, the heroine, consistent only in her inconsistency, invariably sets her affections upon the worst and most heartless of her countless admirers, clings to him with a constancy as romantic as it is incredible; and when he comes to the customary violent end, consoles herself by immolating a score of masculine hearts on his tomb. All this is doubtless very touching and pathetic, with the single drawback of being impossible; but it produces what the fairer portion of the novel-reading public would probably think a rather serious result, namely, the heroine never gets married at all. Busied with the Gothic sacrifice above mentioned, she marches on her devastating way, and disappears at the close of the third volume, with the miniature of a defunct guardsman in her escritoire, unutterable despair at her heart, and an obtrusive tinge of red on the tip of her nose. 'So geht der Mensch zu Ende!'"

"Isn't that too bad now?" roars Harry; "and that, too, when everybody says that

my love scenes are the best things I've done! And here again—just listen:

"One thing, however, Mr. Flutterby does understand—the advantage of a recurring simile. Homer himself was not more skilful in bringing in the same comparison a dozen times in succession. Whenever he has to describe houses surrounded by trees, we find them 'peeping like shy children from the arms of their encircling forests;' and this rule once laid down, they continue peeping to the end of the story. In fact, these indefatigable Babes in the Wood seem to haunt Mr. Flutterby's dreams as pertinaciously as the phantom child haunted those of Jane Eyre previous to the death of her aunt."

At this point Harry sums up his opinion of the critique by sending it flying through the window in fifty fragments, and sitting down to breakfast with an expression of countenance which might have suited Victor Hugo's Gilliatt when watching the midnight interview between Déruchette and Monsieur Caudray. But it is wonderful what a soothing effect a good breakfast has upon even the most lacerated nerves; and before the end of his third cup of coffee and second plateful of fresh salmon, even the outraged Harry begins to look as if there were still something worth living for. By the time we get down to the boat he is quite cheerful again.

"I had meant to have a pull," he observes, as we stow away our provision-basket in the stern; "but as the wind's in our favour, we may just as well hoist the sail, and take it easy. In the mean time, here's a Times that I haven't opened yet; just overhaul it, and give us what there is."

I unfold the august broad-sheet, and plod steadily through the various topics of the day—the Geneva Arbitration, Mr. Stanley's discovery of Doctor Livingstone, the demand for an increase of wages, the continuance of the coal famine, the rumoured progress of Russia in the Far East, the impending conference at Berlin—to all which Harry listens with silent attention.

"I'll tell you what," he remarks at length, with a meditative air, "I wish somebody would bring out a Diplomatic Dictionary, containing all the new political phrases now in use; for, really, if we go on long at this rate we shall forget the original meaning of words altogether. France suddenly attacks Germany, and calls it 'resisting unjust aggression.' Germany runs off with everything worth

stealing in France, and calls it 'levying contributions.' Austria gets together several hundred thousand men, and Heaven knows how many guns, and says that she does so 'to preserve peace.' America overcharges us at the rate of two thousand per cent, and mildly terms it 'indirect claims.' Russia knocks several thousand men on the head, sends half a dozen kings flying off their thrones, pockets a score of provinces, and christens these energetic amusements 'a mission of civilisation.' Upon my word, I've half a mind to start a dictionary myself."

"Do, my dear fellow, it will be a most interesting work, and I don't think your friend, Mr. Slasher, can find much to say against it."

"Don't mention the beast!" yells Harry, stung into momentary fury by the hated name. "I wish I could come across him just now!"

"He'd stand a poor chance if you did," remark I, glancing admiringly at my friend's mighty frame, which might serve as a model for Guy Livingstone, or any other disciple of the school of muscular anti-Christianity. But come, old fellow, look about you a bit—you're missing a first-rate view."

The surrounding panorama does, indeed, merit more attention than we have yet bestowed upon it. Overhead stretches the blue, cloudless sky, bright with all the short-lived splendour of the northern summer. Behind us lies the charming little valley that we have left, its smooth green surface standing out picturesquely against a dark background of forest; while in the midst of it, like chickens nestling round the mother-hen, the tiny red huts of the fishermen cluster around the little wooden church which their sturdy old pastor built with his own hands. To right and left, long ridges of dark heathy hill succeed each other like waves, ending at length in a mighty wall of black broken rock, on the summit of which it needs no stretch of imagination to picture to oneself Thor hurling defiance at the congregated Frost Giants, or chained Loki writhing as the poison drips upon his upturned face. All around us lies the smooth dark surface of the fjord, dappled with rocky islets wooded almost to the water's edge; while far away to the westward, where a huge gap breaks the great rampart of rock, a long white line marks the spot where the glassy lake meets the fury of the unresting ocean; and from the unseen

breakers beyond comes the deep sonorous monotone which Homer's hexameters learned from the roll of the Ionian sea.

"Come, now," says Harry, admiringly, "you've been about a good bit—did you ever see anything to beat this in Arabia, or Russia, or Brazil?"

"Depends on how you take them," answer I. "Arabia's an endless circus—Russia an endless billiard-board—and Brazil's all the waves of the Deluge frozen into forests. There's good scenery in all three, if you care to keep your eyes open; but I grant you that one doesn't see a view like this every day."

"This must be our island, just ahead," cries Harry, a moment later. "Stand by to lower the sail, while I fish out the boat-hook."

A few minutes later we disembark upon our miniature terra incognita, and, hastily mooring our boat, scramble up the rocks with our provision-basket. Having deposited this latter in a snug place under a clump of overhanging trees, we proceed to explore our new kingdom.

"I wish we had brave old Sartor Resartus here for five minutes," remark I; "wouldn't he enjoy himself! I remember his telling me once that, of all the pagan creeds, he liked the Scandinavian the best; and well he may—it seems just made for him."

"Holloa!" cries Harry, stopping short suddenly, as we turn a sharp corner, "look here!"

I spring forward, and perceive that our right of possession is already anticipated. At our feet, wrapped in a plaid, and with his head pillowed on a moss-grown root, lies a good-looking young man in a coarse tweed suit, with a fair complexion and reddish-brown moustache of an Englishman.

"Here's a rival Columbus in the field, then," remark I; "but how the deuce did he get here? I see no sign of a boat?"

"He's fast enough asleep, anyhow!" says Harry, "or else he must be stone deaf, not to have heard me shout. However, let's see what he's made of, at any rate;" and he gives the sleeper's shoulder a good shake.

"Excuse my disturbing you—but the sun's rather hot already, and you're lying right in it."

The stranger starts up, rubbing his eyes with an air of bewilderment.

"Many thanks," says he at length, with

a polite bow; "but—holloa! is the tide up?"

"Rather!" answers Harry, staring; "didn't you know?"

"Just like my luck!" cries the stranger, with an air of vexation. "I walked over from the seaward side last night, along that range of rocks yonder" (he points to something like a very ill-built garden-wall, standing gauntly out below the transparent water), "meaning to see the sun rise, and get back before the tide caught me; but, of course, I overslept myself, as I always do, when it's specially important that I should not."

"Just as it always rains on a picnic day, and a slice of bread always falls with the buttered side downward—a law of gravitation which I wish Sir Isaac Newton had investigated while he was about it," laughs Harry. "Never mind—we'll give you a cast back in our boat. Holloa! what the deuce! why, where on earth is the boat?"

Echo answered, "Nowhere!" Whether (as Harry afterwards asserted) the rope had got frayed through against a sharp rock, or whether (as I am inclined to suspect) he had been careless in reeving it—from whatever cause, the boat had got loose and floated away; and we found ourselves imprisoned in our new kingdom. We stared at each other for a moment, and then burst into a loud laugh.

"Ill-luck's catching, seemingly," said Harry. "Well, it can't be helped—we must just wait till the tide goes out. In the mean time, let's be as jolly as we can."

And very jolly we were, in spite of our mishaps. Our *al fresco* lunch was a decided success, and our unexpected guest proved a host in himself. He told good stories, cracked jokes, talked well on all manner of subjects, and sang comic songs by the half-dozen. It was a sufficient proof how thoroughly amused we had been, that all this time (Englishmen though we all three were) we had never thought of asking each other's names; but at length the idea seemed to strike Harry and the unknown simultaneously.

"I'll tell you what," said Harry, "I'll just give you my address, and you must come and see me when you get back to England; it'll never do to let our acquaintance drop, after such a romantic commencement."

"With great pleasure," answered the stranger; "and I'll give you mine. For

that matter, it's only by a fluke that I'm here at all just now, when I ought to be in London reviewing."

"Reviewing!" echoed Harry, starting as if he had been stung: you're not a reviewer, surely? By Jove, you're much too good a fellow for a beastly trade like that!"

"Beastly trade, eh?" said the other, laughing; "why, what harm has it ever done you? Surely I can't have cut up some book of yours without knowing it?"

The two men began to eye each other keenly. I, already foreseeing the glorious dénouement, drew a little aside to enjoy it at my leisure.

"What review do you belong to?" asked Harry, after a pause.

"The Draco," responded his new acquaintance.

"The Draco!" yelled Harry, in a voice that would have made the fortune of a boatswain. "There's no need to ask your name—you're Fred Slasher or the devil!"

"And you're Harry Flutterby!"

I have seen many a tableau on the stage, but never one to equal that. For a moment the two stood face to face like statues—and then suddenly burst into a tremendous roar of laughter, which the surrounding rocks echoed back as if Odin and his companions were still revelling there.

"By Jove!" said Harry, wiping the tears from his eyes, "this is the best lark I ever saw in my life! Talk of a play! it beats all the plays put together! Do you remember that yarn in the Arabian Nights, where the old king locks his son up in the heart of the mountain, for fear Prince What's-his-name should come and kill him? And Prince What's-his-name was shipwrecked at the very place, and came and polished him off right enough! By Jove, this is just it over again—ha, ha!"

And the laughter began again louder than ever, till I joined in from sheer infection.

"Well, I'll tell you what," said Slasher; "this way along the rocks will bring you out on the other side of the fjord, and it's a good way from there to your diggings; so you'd better just stop with me to-night. I can promise you a good supper, anyhow, if old Bjorn does his duty."

And he did do it, as was amply proved by our trencher practice two hours later. A jollier evening, or a more entertaining host, it has never been my fortune to meet with; and it was long after midnight before our party broke up. Harry's fare-

well remark to his ci-devant enemy is well worth quoting :

"Tell you what, old fellow—it strikes me that if all the critics and authors who're at loggerheads just now in England, were to meet and talk things over quietly, as you and I have done, it would be a rattling good job for 'em both!"

And so say I.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XVI. A DISCOVERY.

HE stood before the pair, and in a quiet, calm voice said to her: "You are missing all the good music. Are you not coming back to the room?"

Corinna started up. Her face was radiant. Mr. Doughty looked from one face to the other with an angry suspicion.

"Will you come with me?" he said. "When they see such an artist as you absent, they will think the music I offer very poor indeed, and not worth listening to."

"Obey," said Mr. Duke, a little scornfully. "There is no alternative."

Mr. Doughty did not answer, but put her arm in his, and both walked away.

"What does this mean?" he said. "You were good enough to show an interest in our performance. You gave some useful hints; yet you did not think it worth listening to on this great occasion."

"Do forgive me, forgive me," said Corinna, eagerly; "it was stupid and thoughtless of me, and most ungrateful."

"Ungrateful," he said, quickly. "That is nothing. But thoughtless—ah! that means much more. I am not thoughtless where you are concerned. While you were engaged here I was thinking of you. It is all settled; that is, if you wish it to be settled, you have but to say yes. Express your wish, and your next appearance can be on a greater stage, in London; or, if you desire it, you can stay two years abroad with the best Italian masters. Understand," he added, hastily, "and this with no obligation to me. If you enter into a formal engagement, you will be independent, and the means will be provided from your future gains. You know that if I could venture to do so I would offer all that I had in aid of such a plan; but I dare not. But at all events there is what you have wished for open to you."

She was in great confusion. "What will you think of me if I tell you that now I do not care for this life?"

"A very sudden change," he said, gravely. "But are you in earnest? Have you quite made up your mind to this?"

"I should not like it; I feel no vocation for that kind of life. And this all comes suddenly."

"Shall I tell you what I feel?" he said, eagerly. "That I am delighted to hear of this resolution. I never could bear the idea of one like you—so sacred in my eyes—coming out before crowds in tawdry dresses and paint; but it was your wish, and what you decide on becomes ennobled. This, however, simplifies everything, and takes away a barrier. I fancied you were so devoted to your art, and to this purpose of the stage, that it would be idle—a profanation, indeed—to attempt to divert you from it. Now the time has come for me to speak freely, and say what has long been in my thoughts. May I?"

"No, no," said Corinna, almost passionately, "I implore you not. You must not. You will only detest me, for you will think I have been playing a double part. Let everything remain as it is. You must not say what you want to say. Continue to like me; let me not lose your friendship and esteem for ever."

Mr. Doughty was deadly pale. He looked at her with eyes that seemed almost to distend. There was a long silence, but at last he spoke. Corinna's eyes were bent upon the ground.

"You make too much of all this," he said, with a forced smile, "and I dare say I understand you. But I shall do so more clearly if you will answer one question. What is the reason of this change in your views? Come, now, be frank and open with me—a poor foolish man that has lived all his life in dreams and delusions, and is old enough to be your father. Come, speak," he added in almost a peremptory tone, "I have a right to know this."

"How am I to tell you?" faltered Corinna.

"Something that has made you happy—very happy?" he went on.

Still Corinna did not answer.

"I thought so," he answered, with an effort. "And of course your kindly and well-meant caution to me is connected with this event. Come," he again added, almost fiercely, "I am surely entitled to answers from you on these points; it is the least, after all, you can do."

"You misjudge me," said Corinna, a little frightened at his tone.

"Now then," he said, "listen to me, and weigh carefully, I conjure you, what I am going to say, and do not impute it to any selfish motive. I tell you, you are being led away by a shadow, by a phantom more light and vapourised than any that has ever danced before a traveller crossing a marsh. I warn you. I, who was your devoted friend, and worshipper—I mean who am so still, though you have deceived me."

"I have not, indeed. At least I never intended it."

"Perhaps I deceive myself; that, I suppose, must be the truth. But, I conjure you, think of my warning. It is not too late. I tell you as surely as I stand here, you will shipwreck all your happiness if you pursue the new course you have determined on. I know human nature, and man's human nature. You are deceived now, and will be deceived."

Corinna looked at him steadily. She forgot all else save the one subject nearest to her heart.

His lips trembled. "Mind, you have been warned. Do not blame me if you find yourself shipwrecked in peace and hope and happiness. Like all women you have settled your heart on those whose hearts are not settled on you, and who only think of trifling with you. But it is only one more disappointment for me; that yours may not come later is my wish."

There was something so bitter, and even hostile in his tone, in his tightened lips, that Corinna drew herself up and answered firmly:

"I have answered you candidly and fairly. And let me say that there is no one else whom I would have allowed to question me, or bring me to account. This was because I think you have a genuine interest in me. But let me assure you I never for a moment dreamed that, beyond a mere admiration for my musical gifts, and an interest in my position——"

"And you must not for the world dream anything else," he said, in a hard, sarcastic tone. "Your judgment was perfectly correct. A poor elderly virtuoso would not think of anything else unless he were a fool. I may be elderly, but not a fool, I trust. But we are losing all the fine music; people will be wondering what has become of us, and will be settling, as I believe some of the gossips have settled already, that some very serious matters are

being arranged. Let us go back, or rather I will bring you to your favoured cavalier, for whom, as I must conclude, you make the grand sacrifice of a career. Listen. As you have made me your confidant in this matter, I am bound to aid you to the utmost, and you may really depend on me. I have been singularly unlucky in the one or two attachments I have had in my life, so I must indemnify myself by forwarding the interests of others. I shall look after the favoured being in this case on whose faith you have staked your happiness, unwisely, as it seems to my dull mind. I solemnly promise you I shall strain every nerve to make him act as one ought to do who has been honoured by such an enviable preference!"

He seemed to Corinna to change as he spoke these words, which had a tone of menace in them rather than of friendly encouragement. She felt awed and helpless. This night, indeed, appeared to the gay and airy guests who were fluttering through Mr. Doughty's rooms to be no more than some pleasant evening of amusement like many others. But for the personages of this little piece it was one fraught with the highest dramatic interest. At many a ball and party and dinner, which to the average guest seems a mere formal show, some such strange drama is secretly going forward—the course of true love running smooth or roughly, jealousy and rage rising rampant; disappointment, the certain ruin of tomorrow, or excruciating physical pains being hidden away under smiles and agreeable talk. So it was to be, in some degree, with Mr. Doughty, Alfred Duke, and Corinna.

There never was a girl so full of a proper pride as this Corinna; a pride made singularly sensitive by the position of her family. Where there was any unfavourable misconception of her motives or behaviour, she would never condescend to set right those who could thus misconstrue her. Few of those who have followed this scene to the end would suspect that there had been a grave and serious misconception from beginning to end. In another case she would have swept away haughtily, under the impression that she had been treated with cruel injustice, but she thought of all Mr. Doughty's kindness, the romantic interest he had shown in her, and she put her pride away for a moment.

"There is here some change, some sudden resolution," she said, turning to him, "I can see this plainly. But take

care that there has not been a mistake here, a mistake that you may regret, that we may both regret. You may find it out too late."

"I have found it out," he answered, bitterly, "and am content. Now, let me bring you back to your friend and admirer."

They returned to the music-room. Lady Duke, sitting at the door, and eagerly scanning their faces, read in them a full and true account of all that had occurred. Her crafty scheme had succeeded so far. She had secured him in a moment, and interposed her daughter. "Emmeline is enchanted. She never heard such music in her life," &c. "Yes, indeed," says Emmeline, fervently, "it is a new world to me, like angels playing." This was pretty strong, and the speech was overheard by Will Gardiner, who was never weary of repeating it. He, too, had been watching the strange proceedings of the evening, and had kept wary watch on the parties.

"Well, Lady Duke," he said, in his bluntest style, "if the match doesn't come off after to-night, there never was love-making in this world. Miss Corinna might have her action against your son, and get swinging damages. Ha, ha! They would make a very handsome pair."

Mr. Doughty was standing close by, and heard this remark; so they could see by a sharp twitch which seemed to pass across his spare shoulders. It was as though some one had stabbed him in the back. Mr. Will Gardiner's face, so honest and jovial, was now a combination that seemed almost grotesque, of a sort of greed and malice that fitted badly with the old good nature. In a moment he had his arm in a most affectionate fashion about Mr. Doughty, who seemed to be fast growing back into "Old Doughty" again.

"'Pon my word, you have done this magnificently. And I can tell you, you have given your protégée a regular prestige. I want to tell you the Dukes, both mother and son, are cottoning to her fast enough. 'Pon my soul, I believe they think you'll come down with a fortune for the girl."

Mr. Doughty slowly withdrew himself. "Your compliments are always elegant from their heartiness," he said. "The arrangement you suggest would, I am sure, be very pleasant for all the parties concerned. I have some interest in this clever young lady, and should be happy to help her in the way you propose. But I am hardly so sanguine as you."

"More in the style of Captain Shilly-Shally," said the other, with a burst of genuine enjoyment. He was, in truth, delighted to see that "no harm had been done."

The concert proceeded to its close. Mr. Doughty was the most painstaking of hosts, though many people remarked the old "dryness," which, in an elderly man, would be pronounced cantankerousness. To compliments and congratulations he answered, with a half-sarcastic tolerance, "that it was very good of them to be so entertained by his exertions." Had not his protégée, Miss Corinna, excelled herself? He hoped, by-and-bye, they would all be hearing her in a very different arena from that poor room. Her noble voice would fill an opera-house. Now for supper.

Lady Duke was the greatest lady there. So the host came to "take her in." He approached her as she sat, the centre of an obsequious group. "We must go in to supper," he said. "But, first, where's mademoiselle? Ah! There's some pretty interesting work going on there. Master Alfred will have something to tell you when he gets home to-night."

Lady Duke looked a little alarmed at these public compliments. "Alfred was always fond of flirting," she said.

"Oh," he answered, gravely, "this is no flirtation. Miss Corinna is a person who must not be trifled with in that style. Her disposition is too noble, too much out of the common, for such treatment. Ah! Here they come. Mr. Duke, take in Miss Corinna to supper."

Every one standing round was listening with some surprise. No one was so mystified as the young hero, Mr. Alfred Duke. He expected bitterness, mortification, and spite.

During the supper Mr. Doughty enchanted all the ladies about him with what they called his "dry wit." He was unsparing in his criticisms. Miss Duke, who had contrived to get next to him, was convulsed with laughter.

"I must have some strange powers of entertaining," he said, looking at the young lady at the close of one of these appreciative bursts, "that has suddenly developed itself. Indeed, I have noticed that whatever I say always tells—that is, within the last few weeks."

Will Gardiner struck in with his usual noisy indiscreetness.

"We all remarked that it has not been telling in one quarter to-night, Doughty. How is that?"

Mr. Doughty looked at Lady Duke, then over at the pair, who were silent enough. "I am one of those good-natured people who hope to make their friends happy. Things are going very fairly, I think, and after to-night we may at least hope——"

Lady Duke turned pale. Will Gardiner burst into one of his favourite roars. He was delighted with this new turn, and his anxiety was now relieved. He at once took the cue, and for the rest of the supper the table echoed with his rough jests, his congratulations and praises of the "happy pair," as he called them, with many an "Oh, you are very deep, Doughty. I vow he took me in." About one o'clock the party broke up, and went home. When the sound of clattering carriages had died away the owner of the place was left alone in the great waste of his great music-room, alone with the long and disordered piles of chairs, and the music and instruments scattered about. After all those sounds there was a stillness. A sort of fury came into his face.

"Befooled and deceived again," he said aloud, as he literally stamped to and fro. "Are these smooth-faced women all demons, that they lay themselves out to play with our wretched hearts? Why could she not leave me in peace to my music, without seeking to make me her plaything, show me off to the people here as one full of a childish infatuation? She has only used me to lead on that creature whom she loves, and, as I stand here, I shall mark it to her and hers. She shall be left as deserted as she has left me!"

CHAPTER XVII. A WARNING.

ALFRED DUKE had, in truth, a strange and secret dislike to the cold and rather mysterious being whose guest he had been, who seemed to gauge perfectly all the uncertainties of his weak soul, and actually to be acquainted with all the crooked passages and little cabins of his mind. There was a jealousy and awe mixed up with these feelings, and when the element of wealth was added there came a sense of his rival's superiority which seemed to gnaw at his very heart. This gentleman was so accustomed to have his own way in the world, to be petted by the young damsels with whom he consorted in garrison towns, that this opposition annoyed him exceedingly. It must be again said that, if not actually "in love" with Corinna, he had a violent inclination towards that young person, such as gentlemen of the garrison often experience for the young

ladies of the district where they are quartered.

He was walking down to the club, very proud of his last night's proceedings, and of the victory he had gained, of which, no doubt, all the ladies in the place were talking, or would be talking, on that day. After all, they would see that wealth did not always carry the day, and that the cold, crabbed fellow, with his owl-like airs of wisdom and giving advice, had, in mess-table phrase, been "holed." The matchless Corinna understood the difference between mere vulgar attractions of money and the wealth of youth and grace, which he possessed. As he indulged in these thoughts he felt some one touch his shoulder.

"My dear Duke," said Mr. Doughty, for it was he, "will you let me ask you a question? Do you ever make up your mind on a particular matter?"

The other looked at him haughtily. "Make up my mind? Perhaps I do; perhaps I don't. Why do you ask?"

"Not very satisfactory as an answer. But I really wish you would in reference to one matter. You have given a deal of trouble and anxiety in one quarter, and have disturbed a poor family, who are in a sphere far below yours. Is this fair; is it honourable; is it becoming a gentleman?"

The other started up. "Really, Mr. Doughty, you are a sort of relation of ours, but I do not think you are privileged to address me in this style. What are my proceedings to you?"

"I am not to be offended," said the other, coolly; "and having come here to speak plainly and candidly, I shall do so. All I wish is, that matters should be explained clearly and definitely. You had a great triumph last night at my house. Every one—and there were two hundred people there—saw the honoured preference that you received. I am sure you deserved it. I have heard this morning that it is considered certain that you have won the affections of Miss Nagle, that you have made a conquest."

A curious twinkle of pride came into the young man's eyes. This was the happiest flattery conceivable. The other went on:

"As for me, an humble and distant admirer of her talents and beauty, I was completely distanced—literally nowhere. If I had any humble pretensions, they were effectually extinguished."

"Really?" said Mr. Duke, complacently. "Well, after all, you see, money is not the chief thing in the world. Girls are not

always ready to sell themselves. But surely, my good Mr. Doughty, you could not have seriously thought that a fine, handsome, brilliant girl like that would have wished to sacrifice her affections, even for your handsome fortune. Girls will be girls, you know, just as boys will be boys."

"No doubt," said the other. "And I am delighted to hear this from you. Now, has it occurred to you that this grand triumph of yours, at which you are smiling so pleasantly, may have been obtained at the expense of a poor girl—at the result of her mortification and unhappiness. You may prevent her obtaining one who would really love and cherish her, and place her in a situation of comfort, where she would not have to work for her bread, while you offer her in return the trumpery and trifling solace of your royal preference, which will neither support her nor shield her from mortification, nor provide for her, but, on the contrary, only leave her wretched, disappointed, deserted, and her whole life blighted. This noble and gallant course, I am sure, is not what you propose."

At this burst of what was almost eloquence, declaimed with a warmth and passion that contrasted strangely with the cold temperament of the speaker, Mr. Duke was confused and confounded. After a while he recovered himself.

"I am not to be driven into a corner in this way, and brought to book by you or any one else. What right have you to assume that I have any such intentions? I allow no man to cross-examine me in this style."

"No right in the world," said Mr. Doughty, calmly, "beyond the interest we both have in the young lady. You will admit that regard for her justifies a great deal. She must not be sacrificed. Are you ashamed—as indeed I suspect you are—of having your august name coupled with hers, and are the people here to know that you mean nothing by these attentions? What must we tell her, too, for it is only fair she should know. Come, be a man, be honourable and straightforward. Have some generosity for this poor loving heart, who has sacrificed you know how much for you. Leave me out of the case."

"Indeed," said the other, with a sort of

triumph. "So this accounts for your bitterness. She was not to be tempted by gold!"

"You are welcome to that assumption if it pleases you, provided you engage to take some distinct course. Either come forward and make her your wife, in spite of all, for I know she loves you, or leave this place, and leave her."

"And leave the coast clear for you. Thank you. I am not bound to shape my conduct at any one's bidding, or to choose any particular course because you desire it. I may do what you desire, or I may not. I must decline to give any information on the subject."

"That is enough, more than enough. I shall be more communicative than you. Take a friendly warning. I venture to say that I know the course you have decided on, which is not a manly one. The thought in your mind is not that of marrying this music-master's daughter. With your pride of family, you would disdain to stoop so low, though she is infinitely above you. Now mark me. I look on you as unworthy of her, but still she likes you, and that is sufficient. From this moment every resource I possess, and such mental power as I have, which is more than you may give me credit for, will be devoted to this set purpose—to make you declare yourself, and force you to carry out what you have engaged to do, or, if this be not your view, drive you away at once from her side, and for ever, as I would some noxious animal. Mind, this is not said in anger or in spite. As sure as you stand there, it will be done. For you are weaker than I am."

Mr. Doughty made Alfred a bow, and, with a pleasant smile on his face, left him to reflect on this strange warning.

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A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 219. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER XLI. THE FLITTING.

WE were ruined!

What must the discovery have been to poor mamma? She saw all the monstrous past; the delirium was dissipated. An abyss was between her and her former life. In the moment of social death all that she was leaving had become almost grotesque, incredibly ghastly. Here in a moment was something worse than poverty, worse even than death.

During papa's life the possibility of those vague vexations known as "difficulties" and "embarrassments," might have occurred to me, but that I should ever have found myself in the plight in which I now stood had never entered my imagination.

Suppose, on a fine evening, a ship, with a crash like a cannon, tears open her planks on a hidden rock, and the water gushes and whirls above the knees, the waists, the throats of the polite people round the tea-table in the state cabin, without so much as time interposed to say God bless us! between the warning and the catastrophe, and you have our case!

Young ladies, you live in a vague and pleasant dream. Gaslight in your hall and lobbies, wax lights, fires, decorous servants, flowers, spirited horses, millinery, soups and wines, are products of nature, and come of themselves. There is, nevertheless, such a thing as poverty, as there is such a thing as death. We hold them both as doctrines, and, of course, devoutly believe in them, but when either lays its cold hand on your shoulder, and you look it in the face, you are as much appalled as if you never heard its name before.

Carelessness, indolence, a pleasurable supineness, without any other grievous fault, or enormous mistake, had, little by little, prepared all for the catastrophe.

Mamma was very ill all that night. In the morning Mr. Forrester came again. Mamma could not see him; but I had a long interview with him. He was very kind. I will tell you, in a few words, the upshot of our conference.

In the first place, the rather startling fact was disclosed that we had, in the world, but nine pounds eight shillings, which mamma happened to have still in her purse, out of her last money for dress. Nine pounds, eight shillings! That was all that interposed between us and the wide republic of beggary.

Then Mr. Forrester told me that mamma must positively leave the house in which we were then residing, to avoid being made, as he said, "administratrix in her own wrong," and put to great annoyance, and seeing any little fund that relations might place at her disposal wasted in expenses and possible litigation.

So it was settled we were to leave the house, but where were we to go?

That was provided for. Near High Holborn, in a little street entered between two narrow piers, stood an odd and ancient house, as old as the time of James the First, which was about to be taken down to make way for a model lodging-house. The roof was sound, and the drainage good; that was all he could say for it; and he could get us leave to occupy it, free of rent, until its demolition should be commenced. He had, in fact, already arranged that for mamma.

Poor papa had owed him a considerable sum for law costs. He meant, he said, to remit the greater part of it, and whatever the estate might give him, on account of

them, he would hand over to mamma. He feared the sum would be a small one. He thought it would hardly amount to a hundred pounds, but in the mean time she could have fifty pounds on account of it.

She might also remove a very little furniture, but no more than would just suffice, in the scantiest way, for our bedrooms and one sitting-room, and such things as a servant might take for the kitchen. He would make himself responsible to the creditors for these.

I need not go further into particulars. Of course there were many details to be adjusted, and the conduct of all these arrangements devolved upon me.

Mr. Forrester undertook all the dealings with the servants whom it was necessary to dismiss and pay forthwith.

The house was now very deserted. There was no life in it but that feverish fuss like the preparations that condemned people make for their executions. The arrangements for our sorrowful flight went on like the dismal worry of a sick dream.

In our changed state we preferred country servants, and I wrote for good old Rebecca Torkill and one of the rustic maids at Malory, who arrived, and entered on their duties, the day before our departure.

How outlandish these good creatures appeared when transplanted from the primitive life and surroundings of Malory to the artificial scenes of London! But how comfortable and kindly was their clumsiness compared with the cynical politeness and growing contempt of the cosmopolitan servants of London!

Well, at last we were settled in our strange habitation. It was by no means so uncomfortable as you might have supposed. We found ourselves in a sitting-room of handsome dimensions, panelled with oak up to its ceiling, which, however, from the size of the room, appeared rather low. It was richly moulded, after the style of James the First's reign, but the coarse smear of newly-applied whitewash covered its traceries.

Our scanty furniture was collected at the upper end of the apartment, which was covered with a piece of carpet, and shut off from the lower part of the room by a folding screen. Some kind friend had placed flowers in a glass on the table, and three pretty plants in full blow upon the window-stones. Some books from a circulating library were on the table, and some volumes also of engravings. These little signs of care and refinement took off something of

the gaunt and desolate character which would have, otherwise, made this habitation terrifying.

A rich man, with such a house in the country, might have made it curiously beautiful; but where it was, tenanted by paupers, and condemned to early demolition, who was to trouble his head about it?

Mamma had been better in the morning, but was now suffering, again, from a violent palpitation, and was sitting up in her bed; it was her own bed, which had been removed for her use. Rebecca Torkill, who had been here for some hours managing everything to receive her, was now in her room. I was in our "drawing-room," I suppose I am to call it, quite alone. My elbows rested on the table, my hands were over my eyes, and I was crying vehemently. These were tears neither of cowardice nor of sorrow. They were tears of rage. I was one of those impracticable and defiant spirits who, standing more in need than any other of the chastisements of Heaven, resent its discipline as an outrage, and upbraid its justice with impious fury.

I dried my eyes fiercely. I looked round our strange room with a bitter smile. Black oak floor, black oak panelling up to the ceiling; as evening darkened how melancholy this grew!

I looked out of the window. The ruddy sky of evening was fading into grey. A grass-grown brick wall, as old as the house perhaps, and springing from the two piers, enclosed the space once occupied by the street in which it had stood. Nothing now remained of the other houses but high piles of rubbish, broken bricks, and plaster, through which, now and then, a black spar or plank of worn wood was visible in this dismal enclosure; beyond these hillocks of ruin, and the jagged and worn brick wall, were visible the roofs with slates no bigger than oyster-shells, and the clumsy old chimneys of poverty-stricken dwellings, existing on sufferance, and sure to fall before long beneath the pick and crowbar; beyond these melancholy objects spread the expiring glow of sunset with a veil of smoke before it.

As I looked back upon this sombre room, and then out upon the still more gloomy and ruinous prospect, with a feeling of disgust and fear, and the intolerable consciousness that we were here under the coercion of actual poverty, you may fancy what my ruminations were.

I don't know whether, in my family, there was a vein of that hereditary melan-

choly called suicidal. I know I felt, just then, its horrible promptings. Like the invitations of the Erlking in Goethe's ballad, it "whispered low in mine ear." There is nothing so startling as the first real allurements to this tremendous step. There remains a sense of an actual communication at which mind and soul tremble. I felt it once afterward.

Its insidiousness and power are felt on starting from the dream, and finding oneself, as I did, alone, with silence and darkness, and frightful thoughts.

I think that, but for mamma, it would have been irresistible.

The sudden exertion of my will, and in spite of my impious mood, I am sure, an inward cry to God for help, scared away the brood that had gathered about me with their soft monotonous seduction.

Have you ever experienced the same thing? The temptation breaks from you like a murmur changed to a laugh, and leaves you horrified. I hated life; my energies were dead already. Why should I drag on, with broken heart, in solitude and degradation?

Some pitying angel kept me in remembrance of mamma, sick, helpless, so long and entirely in the habit of leaning upon others for counsel and for action.

When sickness follows poverty, fate has little left to inflict.

One good thing in our present habitation was the fact of its being as completely out of sight as the inmost cavern of the catacombs. That was consolatory. I felt, at first, as if I never should wish to see the light again. But every expression of life is strong in the young; energy, health, spirits, hope.

The dread of this great downfall began to subside, and I could see a little before me; my head grew clearer, and was already full of plans of earning my bread. That, I dare say, would have been easy enough, if I could have made up my mind to leave mamma, or if she could have consented to part with me. But there were many things I could do at home.

Mamma was sometimes better, but her spirits never rallied. She cried almost incessantly; I think she was quite heart-broken. If she could have given me some of her gentleness, and if I could have inspired her with some of my courage, we should have done better.

The day after our arrival, as I looked out of the window listlessly, I saw a van drive between the piers. Two men were

on the driver's seat. They stopped before they had got very far. It was difficult navigation among the promontories and islands of rubbish. The driver turned a disgusted look up towards our windows, and made some remark to his companion. They got down and led the horses with circumspection, and with many turns and windings up to the door, and then began to speak to our servant; but, at this interesting moment, I was summoned by Rebecca Torkill to mamma's room, where I forgot all about the van.

But, on returning a few minutes later, I found a piano in our drawing-room. Our rustic maid had not heard or even asked from whom it came; and when a tuner arrived an hour later, I found that nothing could prevail on him to disclose the name of the person or place from which it had come. It had not any indication but the maker's name, and that was no guide.

Two or three days after our flight to this melancholy place, Mr. Forrester called. I saw him in our strange sitting-room. It was pleasant to see a friendly face. He had not many minutes to give me. He listened to my plans, and rather approved of them; told me that he had some clients who might be useful, and that he would make it a point to do what he could with them. Then I thanked him very much for the flowers, and the books, and the piano. But it was not he who had sent them. I began to be rather unpleasantly puzzled about the quarter from which these favours came. Our melancholy habitation must be known to more persons than we supposed.

I was thinking uncomfortably on this problem, when he went on to say:

"As Mrs. Ware is not well enough to see me, I should like to read to you a draft of the letter I was thinking of sending to-day to Lord Chellwood's house. He's to be home, I understand, for a day or two before the end of this week; and I want to hit him on the wing, if I can."

He then read the letter for me.

"Pray leave out what you say of me," I said.

"Why, Miss Ware?"

"Because, if I can't live by my own labour, I will die," I answered. "I think it is his duty to do something for mamma, who is ill, and the widow of his brother, and who has lost her provision by poor papa's misfortunes; but I mean to work; and I hope to earn quite enough to support me; and if I can't, as I said, I don't

wish to live. I will accept nothing from him."

"And why not from him, Miss Ware? You know he's your uncle. Who could you more naturally look to in such an emergency?"

"He's not my uncle; papa was his half-brother only; by a later marriage. He never liked papa—nor us."

"Never mind; he'll do something; I've had some experience; and I tell you, he can't avoid contributing in a case like this; it comes too near him," said Mr. Forrester.

"I have seen him; I have heard him talk; I know the kind of person he is. I have heard poor papa say, 'I wish some one would relieve Norman's mind; he seems to fancy we have a design on his pocket, or his will. He is always keeping us all at arm's-length. I don't think my wife is ever likely to have to ask him for anything.' I have heard poor papa say, I think, those very words. Bread from his hand would choke me; and I can't eat it."

"Well, Miss Ware; if you object to that passage, I shall strike it out, of course. I wrote a second time to Sir Harry Rokestone, and have not yet had a line in reply; and I don't think it likely I ever shall. I'll try him once more; and if that doesn't bring an answer, I think we may let him alone for some time to come.

And now Mr. Forrester took his leave and was gone. The forlorn old house was silent again.

CHAPTER XLII. A FORLORN HOPE.

ANOTHER week passed; mamma was better; not much better in spirits; but very much apparently in health. She was now a great deal more tranquil, though in great affliction. Poor mamma! No book interested her now, but the Bible; the great, wise, gentle friend, so seldom listened to when all goes well; always called in to console, when others fail.

Mr. Forrester had got me some work to do: work much more interesting than I had proposed for myself. It was to make a translation of a French work, for a publisher. For a few days it was simply experimental, but it was found that I did it well and quickly enough; and I calculated that if I could only obtain constant employment of this kind, I might earn about seventy pounds a year. Here was a resource—something between us and actual want; something between me and the terrible condition of dependence. My ambition was humble enough now.

For about two days this discovery of my power, under favourable circumstances, to make sixty or seventy pounds a year, actually cheered me; but this healthier effect was of but short duration. The miseries of our situation were too obvious and formidable to be long kept out of view. Gloom and distraction soon returned; the same rebellious violence inflamed by the fresh alarm of mamma's returning illness.

She was very ill again the night but one after the good news about my translation—breathless, palpitating. I began to grow frightened and desponding about her. I had fancied before that her symptoms were mere indications of her state of mind; but now, when her mind seemed more tranquil, and her nerves quiet, their return was ominous. I was urging her to see Sir Jacob Lake, when Mr. Forrester called, and I went to our drawing-room to see him. He had got a note, cold and petulant, from my uncle, Lord Chellwood, that morning. This letter said that "no person who knew of the number and magnitude of the charges affecting his property, could be so unreasonable as to suppose that he could, even if he had the power, which was not quite so clear, think of charging an annuity upon it, however small, for the benefit of any one." That "he deeply commiserated the distressing circumstances in which poor Frank's widow found herself; but surely he, Lord Chellwood, was not to blame for it. He had never lost an opportunity of pressing upon his brother the obligation he conceived every married man to be under, to make provision for his wife; and had been at the trouble to show him, by some very pertinent figures, how impracticable it was for him to add to the burdens that weighed on the estates, and how totally he, Lord Chellwood, was without the power of mitigating to any extent the consequences of his rashness, if he should leave his wife without a suitable provision." So it went on; and ended by saying, that "he might possibly be able, next spring, to make—it could be but a small one—a present to the poor lady who had certainly much to answer for in the imprudent career in which she had contributed to engage her husband, and during which she had wilfully sacrificed her settlement to the pleasures and vanities of an expensive and unsuitable life." The letter went on in this strain, and hinted that the present he spoke of could not exceed a hundred and fifty pounds, and could not possibly be repeated.

"This looks very black, you see," said the good-natured solicitor. "But I hope it may not be quite so bad as he says. If he could be got to do a little more, a small annuity might be purchased."

I did not like my uncle. It is very hard to get over first impressions, and the repulsion of an entirely uncongenial countenance. There was nothing manly in his face; it was narrow, selfish, conceited. He was pale as wax. He had manners at once dry and languid; and whether it was in his eye or not, I can't say, but there was something in his look, though he smiled as much as was called for, and never said a disagreeable thing, that conveyed very clearly to me, although neither papa nor mamma seemed to perceive it, that he positively disliked us, each and every one, not even excepting poor, gay, good-natured papa. We all knew he was stingy; he had one hobby, and that was the nursing and rehabilitation of the estates which had come to him, with the title, in a very crippled state.

With these feelings, and the pride which is strongest in youth, I fancied that I should have died rather than have submitted to the humiliation of accepting, much less asking, money from his hand.

I must carry you three weeks further on. It was dark; I can't tell you now what o'clock it was; I am sure it was not much earlier than nine. I had my cloak and bonnet on; I was standing at our open door; Rebecca Torkill was at my side, and her thin hand was upon my arm.

"And where are you going, my darling, at this time of night?" she said, looking frightened into my face.

"To see Lord Chellwood; to see papa's unnatural brother; to tell him that mamma must die unless he helps her."

"But, my child, this is no time—you would not go out through them wicked streets at this hour—you shan't go," she said sturdily, taking a firm hold of my arm.

I snatched it from her grasp angrily, and walked quickly away. I looked over my shoulder, as I reached the two piers, and saw the figure of old Rebecca looking black in the doorway, with a background of misty light from the candle at the foot of the stairs. I think she was wavering between the risk of leaving the house, and mamma only half protected, and the urgent necessity of pursuing and bringing me back. I was out of her reach, however, before she could make up her mind.

I was walking as quickly as I could

through the streets that led toward Regent-street. I had studied them on the map.

These out-of-the-way streets were quiet now, but not deserted; now and then I passed the blaze of a gin-palace. It was a strange fear and excitement to me, to be walking through these poor by-streets by gaslight. No fugitive threading the streets of a town in the throes of revolution, had a keener sense of danger, or moved with eye and sinew more ready every moment to start from a walk into a run. I suppose they allow poor people, such as I might well be taken for, walking quickly upon their business, to pass undisturbed. I was not molested.

At length I was in Regent-street. I felt safe now; the broad pavement, the stream of traffic, the long lines of gas-lamps, and the still open shops, enabled me, without fear, a little to slacken my pace.

I required this relief. I had been ill for two days; and was worse. I felt chilly and agueish; I was suffering from one of those stupendous headaches which possibly give the sufferer some idea of the action of that iron "cap of silence," with which, during the reign of good King Bomba, so many Neapolitan citizens were made acquainted. I can afford to speak lightly of it now; but I was very ill. I ought to have been in my bed. Nothing but my tremor about mamma would have given me nerve and strength for this excursion.

She had that day had a sudden return of the breathlessness and palpitation from which she had suffered so much, and I had succeeded in getting Sir Jacob Lake to come to see her.

It was a hurried visit, as his visits always were. He saw her, gave some general directions, wrote a prescription, spoke cheerfully to her, and his manner seemed to say he apprehended nothing.

I came with him to the stairs, which we went down together, and in the drawing-room I heard the astounding words that told me mamma could not live many months, and might be carried off at any moment, in one of those attacks. He told me to get her to the country, her native air, if that could be managed, immediately. That might prolong her life a little. It was only a chance, and at best a reprieve. But without it, he could not answer for a week. He told me that I must be careful not to let mamma know that he thought her in danger. She was in a critical state, and any agitation might be fatal. He took his leave, and I was alone with his dreadful words in my ears.

Now, how was I to carry out his directions? The journey to Golden Friars, as he planned it, would cost us at least twenty pounds, and he had ordered claret, then a very expensive wine, for mamma. He did not know that he was carrying away our last guinea in his pocket. I had but half a sovereign and a few shillings in my purse. Mr. Forrester was out of town; and even if he were within reach, it was scarcely likely that he would lend or bestow anything like the sum required. The work was not sufficiently advanced to justify a hope that he would give me, a stranger, a sum of money on account of a task which I might never complete. Poverty had come in its direst shape. In the distraction of that dreadful helplessness my pride broke down. This was the reason of my wild excursion.

As I now walked at a more moderate pace, I felt the effect of my unnatural exertion more painfully—every pulse was a throb of torture. It was an effort to keep my mind clear, and to banish perpetually rising confusions, the incipient exhalations of fever. What drowsiness is to the system in health, this tendency to drop into delirium is to the sick.

I found myself, at length, almost exhausted, at my noble kinsman's door.

I knocked; I asked to see him. The footman did not recognise me. He simply said, looking across the street over my head, with a careless disdain:

"I say, what's the row, miss?"

Certainly such a visitor as I, and at such an hour, had no very recognisable claim to a ceremonious reception.

"Charles," I said, "don't you know me?—Miss Ware."

The man started a little, looked hard at me, drew himself up formally, as he made his salutation, receding a step, with the hall-door open in his hand.

"Is his lordship at home?" I asked.

"No, miss, he dined out to-day."

"But I must see him, Charles. If he knew it was I he could not refuse. Tell him mamma is dangerously ill, and I have no one to help me."

"He is out, miss; and he sleeps out of town—at Colonel Anson's to-night."

I uttered an exclamation of despair.

"And when is he to return?"

"He will not be in town again for a fortnight, miss; he's going to Harleigh Castle."

I stood on the steps for a minute stunned by the disappointment, staring helplessly into the man's face.

"Please, shall I call a cab, miss?"

"No—no," I said, dreamily. I turned and went away quickly. It troubled me little what the servants might say or think of my strange visit.

This blow was distracting. The doctor had distinctly said that mamma's immediate removal to country air was a necessity.

As people will under excitement, I was walking at the swiftest pace I could. I was pacing under the evergreens of the neighbouring square, back and forward, again and again; I saw young ladies get from a house opposite into a carriage, and drive away, as I once used to do. I hated them; I hated every one who was as fortunate as I once was. I hated the houses on the other side with their well-lighted halls. I hated even the great prosperous shop-keeping class, with their overgrown persons and purses. Why did not fortune take other people, the purse-proud, the scheming, the vicious, the arrogant, the avaricious, instead of us—drag them from their places, and batter and trundle them in the gutter? Here was I, for no fault—none, none!—reduced to a worse plight than a beggar's. The beggar has been brought up to his calling, and can make something of it; while I could not set about it, had not even that form of pluck which people call meanness, and was quite past the age at which the art is to be learned.

All this time I was growing more and more ill. The breathless walking and the angry agitation were precipitating the fever that was already upon me. I had an increasing horror of the dismal abode which was now my home. Distraction like mine demands rapid locomotion as its proper and only anodyne. Despair and quietude quickly subside into madness.

Some public clock not far off struck the hour; I did not count it; but it reminded me suddenly of the risk of exciting alarm at home by delaying my return. So with an effort, and as it were an awaking, I began to direct my steps homewards. But before I reached that melancholy goal, an astounding adventure was fated to befall me.

A NEW ENGLAND PRISON.

How to treat convicted criminals must always be—until the millennium comes which shall be crimeless—one of the most perplexing, as well as one of the most pressing, questions with which law-makers have to deal. The just and humane mean

between cruelty and inefficient punishment has come to be, in these more civilised days, an earnest study and object of search. Never has the world seen so great an activity in striving to make prison discipline itself an engine of true civilisation, as the past quarter of a century has witnessed. The inquiry was going on under the auspices of scientific and philanthropic men, aided by exposures of prison misgovernment from time to time, stimulated by the vivid descriptions of the novelist, and making use of the philosophy of economists and the history of systems from the time of the Achæians to our own. In this, as in most departments of practical political science, England and the United States take the lead in investigation and experiment. The race is never content, in a matter of this sort, until it has reached the best possible result; and, a new light coming in, the last best result no longer suffices, but must be supplemented, or, perhaps, altogether superseded; a more refined humaneness compelling alleviation, and newer suggestions leading to a larger efficiency in accomplishing the true objects of prison discipline.

Too much light it is impossible to secure on a subject of so much importance to the well-being of all societies. Every new modification, pruning, or grafting of systems, is useful, if not as an example, at least as a hint. It is with this thought that we propose to give, as briefly as we may, an account of one of the New England prisons, as it is described by the authorities under whose supervision it has been governed. In no state of the Union has more heed been given to matters of this sort than in Massachusetts: charities, asylums, poor relief, institutions for the reclamation of drunkards and criminals, and prisons, have always been thoroughly and earnestly discussed in the land of the Pilgrims. The intellectual activity of the state has not only developed itself in works of the imagination, of æsthetics, and philosophy—and the names of Longfellow, Lowell, Emerson, and many others, attest the vitality of the Massachusetts minds in these directions—but also in practical inquiries how best to improve and elevate the condition of the community. Massachusetts supplies much more than her share of the annual useful inventions, most of them apt, practical, and timely. The "homes" for drunkards have utilised a new theory of the way to reclaim drinkers in all stages, and it would be interesting, were it not beyond the limits of our subject, to describe

their admirable system. So, in regard to prisons, there is probably no American state which has brought the prison system to a greater efficiency, or to a nearer relation to the objects which prisons ought to serve. A gentleman who has been for more than ten years the warden of the Massachusetts State Prison, and whose administration of that institution, as well as his enlightened advocacy of many reforms, has given him a wide reputation, affords us, in a clear narrative, the benefit of his experience, and the opinions which, from that experience, he has formed. His theories of discipline, which in some respects differ from previous ideas on the subject, have perhaps a greater general value than his descriptions; the latter are, however, of use in illustrating his deductions. The ex-warden is emphatic in his opinion that the Massachusetts system is the best in America, differing as it does from those of all the other states.

The Massachusetts theory, stated briefly, is, that prison discipline has three objects. First, the reformation of the delinquent himself. The best result to be obtained is, to send him forth a better man, and, if possible, restored to good citizenship. Secondly, punishment and example. A bearing hard upon the criminal; first, that he himself may be deterred from future crime; secondly, that his punishment may deter others from crime. And, third, profit; the setting criminals to honest labour, the fruits of which shall revert to the state. The first should be the principal object; punishment as an object should come after it; and the idea of profit should be the last and inferior one. It is often the case, however, that as a matter of fact, the idea of forcing pecuniary profit out of the criminal's condition is uppermost in the prison warden's mind. He is convinced that the best evidence of his efficiency which he can present to the inspectors lies in the amount of dollars and cents which his prison hands over to the public treasury. Wardens cannot always be found who will at once supply good administrative ability and breadth of view. They are too apt to look at their duty from a rigidly material and practical stand-point: to them money figures are the standard of success. Therefore, they inverse the true order of objects, and say that "education, reformation, and good discipline are all very well in their way, but when placed in the balance with profits they kick the beam." The only way to make progress in the science of criminal discipline is to get rid of this notion, and to regard as the very highest

possible object, the moral benefit both of the criminal and the community which he has attacked. The practicability of giving effect to this moral element in prison discipline has long been discussed, retarded by painful doubts, and put off by gloomier and less civilised conceptions of human nature and its possibilities, than those which, happily, are gaining the ascendancy in this age. The Massachusetts system, if it has not been the first to give the predominance to the noble idea of educating, reforming, and entirely reclaiming the criminal, has at least afforded as favourable an illustration of its results as any to be found either in Europe or America. The experiment has been tried, fairly and fully, under the supervision of enlightened and experienced men who have staked their judgment and skill in its success. It is the opinion of the warden to whom we have referred (Mr. Gideon Haynes) that fully eighty per cent of all convicted criminals—including the perpetrators of every species of crime, from petty larceny to murder—may, by proper prison treatment, be reclaimed and made useful members of society. "This reform, however," he says, "cannot be accomplished by rash or cruel treatment, or any other process which has a tendency to crush out and destroy self-respect. The true theory is to fan into a blaze the smallest spark of manhood they may bring with them into prison; they must be assisted and encouraged in every possible way; an opportunity should be afforded them to work out their own redemption—to do something for themselves." This, in epitome, is what the system adopted and pursued in the Massachusetts State Prison undertakes to do.

This prison is situated at Charlestown, separated from Boston only by an arm of the bay, and connected with the state capital by a bridge. The prisoners are brought thither by the officers from all parts of the state, the expenses of their transportation being paid out of the prison fund (provided by the legislature), and the average cost of transportation being a dollar and a half each criminal. Arrived at the State Prison, the convicts are first of all bathed and shaved. Their hair is trimmed, but not as was formerly done as a symbol of disgrace, cropped close to the head. They are provided with a full suit of prison clothes, including two undershirts, two pairs of socks, two pairs of drawers, a thick pair of shoes, a towel, coat and trousers of blue satinet; these articles

are all marked with the prisoner's name. The suit of clothes is not a "prison suit," in the sense of marking ignominiously the condition of the wearers. The once imposed parti-coloured garments, comprising sleeves or legs of different colours, or striped, or checked, are not now used. To adopt any degrading uniform would be calculated to put out that "spark of manhood" which it is the object of the system to keep alive and intensify.

The first day in prison is spent in solitary confinement; excepting that the prisoners are visited by one of the deputy wardens, who explains to them the prison regulations, which are also posted upon the cell doors. The cells, or dormitories, are fitted up with iron bedsteads capable of being turned up to the wall, a palm-leaf mattress and pillows, cotton sheets, blankets, pillow slip, and quilt; a wooden table and chair; a copy of the Holy Writ; a catalogue of the books in the prison library; a spoon, knife and fork, salt, pepper, and a bottle of vinegar. The prisoners are not put at once to the labour in the workshops. Several days are given them for reflection, during which time they are visited by the officers of the prison, who converse freely with them, carry them useful books from the excellent prison library which is provided for their instruction and recreation, and encourage them not only to submit cheerfully to their lot, but as well to avail themselves of the better influences which their prison life will afford them. After a week has passed, the convict is brought before the warden, who examines him regarding his origin, his family, and his previous career; this is doubtless done with the double object of studying his character, and of encouraging him to be communicative. He is promised that, as long as he obeys the rules, he will be treated with kindness. Mr. Haynes says that many touching scenes occur at these interviews, even the more hardened and reckless often being taken by surprise by a kind and paternal tone where they had expected rebuffs and abuse. Many of them have not heard words of kindly interest and encouragement since childhood: many never heard such words even then. The convict not unfrequently melts to tears, and forms sturdy resolutions, here at the outset of his prison life, which are followed up persistently and with the best effect upon his future career. The interview with the warden over, the prisoner is introduced to the workshop. This is no dingy dungeon,

grimy and sooty and dark, as we have seen some workshops in Europe and America, where the prison gloom is intensified, and the prisoner's lot seems doubly terrible. This State Prison workshop is airy, cheerful, pleasant to the eye; it is large and well ventilated, and as cool in summer and warm in winter, as the famous Boston free schools over the water. There is plenty of room, the utensils are of the best, the benches are broad and convenient. The windows are filled with plants and flowers, which the convicts are permitted to tend and cultivate. The officer in charge of the workshop is selected with especial care. He must, first of all, be endowed with patience and self-control; gently firm in manner, straightforward in speech. He is instructed never, under any circumstances, to lose his temper, or to speak pettishly or angrily to the prisoners. If the prisoner transgresses a rule, he is quietly reminded of it, and warned not to trespass again. If he breaks it a second time, he is brought before one of the wardens after working hours, and called on for an explanation. If his explanation is satisfactory, nothing more is said; if not, he is severely reprimanded. A further transgression subjects him to solitary confinement in a dark cell, with a board and a blanket for his sleeping cot, and he is kept there until he petitions to be released. One of the officers is always within hearing, and responds when he calls. No humiliating begging of pardon is asked of him; he has only to say that he will not break the rule again, and he is at once restored to his proper cell.

This imprisonment in the dark cell is the only punishment which has been inflicted in the Massachusetts State Prison for more than twelve years. In some other states—for example, in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Connecticut—the lash is still used, as well as the dark cell. In New York, the shower-bath is added, and the severer penalties of the yoke and the iron cap have not quite disappeared. Mr. Haynes's experience is, that "the dark cell has, in all cases, been found sufficient, and is, doubtless, the least objectionable of any system now in use. I disapprove of it, however, for the following reasons: First, that in darkening the cell, air must necessarily be excluded, and needful ventilation prevented. The constitution of the convict who is frequently, or for any length of time, subjected to this discipline, must, unavoidably, become impaired. Secondly, his labour for the time he is shut up is lost

to the state." Better reasons should be given, if there are any; for these alone would hardly be sufficient to do away with this method. It is difficult, moreover, to discover any punishment which would not be liable to both, or at least to the second, of these objections. At all events, the dark cell is a very material improvement on the lash, the jacket, the iron cap, the shower-bath, or the crucifix. Mr. Haynes would, however, do away with the dark cell, because he would substitute rewards for punishments altogether. During his own administration as warden he tried this experiment, introducing holidays and graduated commutations for the well-behaved, and relying upon these instead of punishments for the refractory. As to commutations, he tells us: "Our commutation law has a great influence upon our discipline. One not familiar with the subject would be surprised to know how much they think of one day's reduction even in a long sentence. Very many are sent to this and other prisons for crimes committed in a momentary passion. An uncontrollable temper has been the ruin of thousands. A prisoner, knowing that his confinement will be extended by any outbreak of the kind, will strive hard to curb it. Although he may find it difficult at first, yet he is pretty certain to succeed in the end; and, at the expiration of every month, he has an additional motive for good conduct, as all that he has gained may be jeopardised by yielding. This discipline continued through a series of years, must have a good effect upon the man. He gradually and almost imperceptibly acquires perfect control over himself; a habit which will not desert him when he goes forth into the world again." The efficacy of the system has, as Mr. Haynes tells us, been fully proved by the result; and it is this happy experiment which leads him to declare the fact before noted, which is as surprising as it is gratifying, that eighty per cent of criminals of every shade are reclaimable.

The daily routine at the State Prison is as follows: The convicts are called up at five o'clock in summer, at six in winter. They proceed at once from their cells to the workshop, where they are required to labour one hour and a half. Then they resort in a body to the dining-room, where they find a plain, wholesome, plentiful breakfast, composed of dishes appropriate to workmen who take but little out-of-door exercise. Thirty-five minutes are allowed them in which to finish breakfast, after

which they are summoned to the morning service in chapel. This service comprises the reading of the Bible, prayer, singing by the choir, which is wholly composed of convicts, and sometimes the chaplain makes a brief exhortation.

The chaplain is one of the most important and useful officers of the prison. He is the best auxiliary of the mild and paternal system, and it is to him that the warden looks for the most efficient aid in turning the convict's thoughts and hopes into higher channels. The chaplain, therefore, is chosen with as much care as the workshop supervisor; he must be sympathetic, patient, persuasive, and endowed with the faculty of making his meaning easily comprehended. Chapel service over, the convicts return to the workshops, where they continue until twelve, when they resort to their cells to prepare for dinner. This meal occupies the time until one or half-past, after which they are again set to work. They stop working at six. The convicts are shaved by the prison barber twice a week, and have the privilege of a bath once a week. For those who prefer it, a spacious tank of salt water is provided, into which the tide flows from the arm of the sea which runs by the prison; some thirty men can enjoy a plunge and a hearty swim here at the same time. "At these times," says Mr. Haynes, "all restraint is thrown off, and for fifteen or twenty minutes they are allowed to enjoy themselves by diving, swimming, and such games and gambols as suit their taste." On Sundays the convicts, at seven in the morning, go to the workshops to wash, and, after breakfast, are locked up in their cells until ten, when they are summoned to attend the weekly Sunday school. As many as there is provision for attend, the room only being large enough to hold about eighty. The manner in which they are divided in this exigency is certainly a wise one. The convicts who cannot read are preferred in the choice of those who may attend the Sunday school; all those left out being the convicts who can read. Thus the economy of education is practised. The teaching in the Sunday school occupies an hour, when the religious services in chapel begin. These services are simple, consisting of Bible reading, prayer, hymn singing, and finally a sermon from the chaplain adapted to the state and capacity of his hearers. Then follows dinner, after which the second service; then supper, and that over, the prisoners are locked up for

the rest of the day. The chaplain visits them in their cells, directs their reading, and suggests to them subjects as the food of their solitary thoughts. On the holidays, which, as we have seen, are used in the system of rewards, there are services in the chapel: extra rations are dealt out to the men at table; and in the afternoon they are indulged with an hour's unrestricted intercourse together in the airy prison-yard, which they heartily avail themselves of, enjoying the momentary breath of liberty in dancing, singing, playing at football, and any other games which the inspiration of the moment or the skill of the participants suggests.

"Newspapers," says Mr. Haynes, "are not allowed, except such religious ones as the chaplain chooses to distribute among them; but they are permitted to read the monthly periodicals. They may change their library books three times a week. The prison is lighted so that they can see to read until eight o'clock in winter; at nine all retire. The prison is perfectly ventilated, and comfortably warmed in the coldest weather. That our sanitary regulations are complete, may be inferred from the fact that we have not had a case of fever for thirteen years."

The prison library is most carefully chosen, the chaplain being consulted in the choice of books. Moral and religious works preponderate, but the library is also supplied with the higher and purer class of novels, essays, histories, and books of travel, as well as bound volumes of the best periodical magazines. Tasks as punishments are unknown at the State Prison; and in no case are the convicts overworked; health is cared for with peculiar solicitude. For voluntary extra work, however, the prisoners are allowed to receive payment from purchasers, and they are allowed to reserve the profits thus gained for their own use, or that of their families. Sometimes these sums are not inconsiderable; and the convict may have the satisfaction of knowing that, though bodily confined within prison walls, he is able to provide for the wants of a wife and children whom he has, perhaps, left in a state of miserable destitution. When the convict's term is completed—and we are told that in a great majority of cases that period has been much lessened by the convict's own good conduct, having constantly before him the beneficent rule of commutation—he is not thrust forth helpless into the world again, thus creating a

temptation to slide back again into his old career of crime; but every disposition is shown to encourage him to commence the life of a good and useful citizen. "When a prisoner's time expires, he is provided with a good suit of clothes throughout, and from three to five dollars; he is then taken in charge, if he desires it, by the state agent for discharged convicts, who has previously visited him to ascertain his wishes; sent to his friends, or provided with a home till a situation is obtained for him, tools furnished him to commence work, and every effort made to give him a good start. At any time after, should he be out of employment, or his family in want, he has only to apply to the agent to obtain the necessary assistance. This agency I think one of the most important of our state charities." Thus it is that the convict, from the moment when his evil career has culminated in a conviction and sentence of the law, is subjected to good influences. With a gloomy past behind him, he is taught to look forward to a cheerful future before him. Received with kindness, as unexpected as it is unwonted, he is encouraged to develop that better nature which it is good to believe lies at the bottom of every criminal heart. If the little spark be there, it is, as the warden says, "fanned into a flame." His health is cared for, his mind is trained, healthy occupation fills his days, his mornings and evenings are passed in useful discourses and contemplation; he is taught an honest trade, the want or ignorance of which may have, in the first place, driven him prisonward; it is made his interest, and, it may be hoped, finally becomes a pleasure to him to conduct himself well; his prison life over, he finds the state standing at his cell door in the person of its agent, extending to him a helping hand, asking him to return to the free air and be a good citizen of the commonwealth, thrusting tools into his hand, leading him to immediate employment, and providing for his family when, by any chance, he finds himself out of work. This is, in brief, the Massachusetts system of to-day. We are not surprised to hear that "its success has exceeded the anticipations of its most ardent supporters, and such as those not familiar with the facts would hardly credit." Every amelioration of the severities of the old system—which was but one of our legacies from a ruder and more revengeful age—every practical demonstration of the theory that convicts are, after all, men, and should be

treated humanely if firmly, seems to have been followed by wonderful improvements in the character and behaviour and aspirations of the convicts themselves.

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM.

THE sea crashed over the grim grey rocks,
It thundered beneath the height,
It swept by reef and sandy dune,
It glittered beneath the harvest moon,
That bathed it in yellow light.

Shell, and seaweed, and sparkling stone,
It flung on the golden sand.
Strange relics torn from its deepest caves,
Sad trophies of wild victorious waves,
It scattered upon the strand.

Spars that had looked so strong and true,
When the gallant ship was launched,
Shattered and broken, flung to the shore,
While the tide in its deep triumphant roar,
Rang the dirge for old wounds long stanch'd.

Petty trifles that love had brought
From many a foreign clime,
Snatched by the storm from the clinging clasp,
Of hands that the lonely will never grasp,
While the world yet counted time.

Back, back to its depths went the ebbing tide,
Leaving its stores to rest,
Unsought and unseen in the silent bay,
To be gathered again ere close of day,
To the ocean's mighty breast.

Kinder than man art thou, oh sea;
Frankly we give our best,
Truth, and hope, and love, and faith,
Devotion that challenges time and death
Its sterling worth to test.

We fling them down at our darling's feet,
Indifference leaves them there.
The careless footstep turns aside,
Weariness, changefulness, scorn, or pride,
Bring little of thought or care.

No tide of human feeling turns,
Once ebb'd, love never flows;
The pitiful wreckage of time and strife,
The flotsam and jetsam of human life,
No saving reflux knows.

TONTI AND TONTINES.

A YEAR or two ago, the attention of the public—or of such portions of the public as are likely to hoard a little capital ready for investment—was invited to a scheme in which a somewhat unfamiliar word was employed. This word was Tontine. Many a reader, when scanning the columns of the daily papers, pondered within himself what this word might mean. Is it the name of a man; or of a place; or of a commodity; or of a system; or of a process? That it had to do with money, was clear enough. The Alexandra Palace and Park, at Muswell Hill, were to pass to a new proprietorship; the capital for completing the purchase was to be raised by means of a Tontine; and the terms of the Tontine were set forth as being favourable

to investors. Of course, therefore, the Stock Exchange is familiar with the nature of Tontines. But it happens that the Stock Exchange has rarely to do with the system, which is seldom practically adopted in our day.

The nature of Tontines may be best shown by tracing their history.

Two hundred and twenty years ago, when Cardinal Mazarin had the whole government and diplomacy of France practically in his hands, an Italian, named Lorenzo Tonti, was in his service, either as secretary, or in some other confidential capacity. The cardinal was at that time unpopular, on account of some of his measures; the public were in an ill humour for paying taxes; and money was wanted for national purposes. Tonti laid before Mazarin a scheme for obtaining an immediate command of money, and at the same time for pleasing the people with the excitement of possibly attainable riches. The cardinal assented to the plan; but the parliament refused to sanction it; and this refusal, in spite of the vast power wielded by Mazarin, was conclusive. What became of Tonti is not quite clear. It would appear that, clinging to a pet theory, he proposed the adoption of it, time after time, to various bodies in want of immediate money. We read of it as a means for raising capital to build a bridge over the Seine; and as a proposed mode for enabling the poor clergy to pay off their debts. But the French did not take kindly to it. Mazarin was an Italian, and so was Tonti; the unpopularity of the one reacted unfavourably on the other; and when a soubriquet was applied to the scheme, derived from the name of its inventor, ridicule was added to distrust. More than forty years elapsed before a Tontine was really established on a large scale. Louis the Fourteenth, requiring money for the League of Augsburg, resolved to raise it by Tonti's plan, or by a method based on that plan; and the year 1689 witnessed the realisation of the idea by the establishment of a 'Tontine Royale, the word Tontine being no longer regarded as a disparaging one.

The principle of the system may now be explained. A Tontine is a sort of lottery of annuities, a compound of the two; or rather, an investment in which lottery, life annuity, and survivorship are all concerned. It does not resemble a life insurance, seeing that it is intended for the benefit of the insurer, whereas a life insurance is for those who come after him. There must always be a large body of per-

sons concerned, whom we may for convenience call Tontineers; and these persons form a society or club, to which no new members can be admitted. They all begin by purchasing shares at a definite price; and they are all to receive a definite interest for their money—definite, that is, in its totality or aggregate; but the interest grows yearly to individual members; and herein consists the peculiarity of the plan. When a member dies, his share does not fall to his widow, child, or representative, but goes to the other members, among whom it is equally divided. When another member dies, another bonus comes in the same way to the surviving members; and so on, one after another; the death of any member being to this extent beneficial to those who are left. The borrower or speculator who established the Tontine is not released from his liabilities by these successive deaths; he pays the same total sum every year as interest on the total amount; and is not immediately interested, for better or for worse, by the death of Jacques Bonhomme or Clément Delorme. The survivors reap the benefit, not by an immediate bonus in cash, nor by a rise in the nominal value of their shares, but by a rise in the rate of interest. If, for instance, a Tontine of ten persons advance one hundred pounds each to a borrower at five per cent, he pays fifty pounds a year interest, five pounds to each; when one dies, the fifty pounds goes to nine persons instead of ten; when a second dies, it goes to eight persons, and is equivalent to six and a quarter per cent; and so, as they die off one by one, the last survivor will receive the whole of the fifty pounds, equivalent, of course, to fifty per cent for his money. Tonti was some two centuries earlier than Mr. Darwin; yet he virtually adopted Darwin's law of the Survival of the Fittest; the Tontineer who survives all his companions may, in a monetary sense, be considered the fittest; he takes all which they would have taken, and becomes heir to the whole of them.

But now comes an important matter to be taken into account. Every member wishes to live as long as he can; and without necessarily being cruel or heartless, wishes his co-members to die as soon as they can. It is the very motive which induced him to select this kind of investment. Now the probable future length of a man's life depends, other things being equal, on his present age. If he is now (say) twenty-five, his expectation of life (in the language of the insurance offices) is greater than

that of a man of thirty; his chance is greater, in this year 1873, of living to see the year 1900, for instance. And a man now thirty has a greater chance than one now thirty-five; and so on. Therefore a Tontineer has a special advantage if all his brother members are older than himself; the ascertained law of mortality (which is wonderfully uniform year after year) points to a probability that he will survive them all: "probability" being, of course, used strictly in this sense. On the other hand, a Tontineer lies under a special disadvantage if all his brother members are younger than himself; the expectation of life, the benefit of survivorship, are against him. The two opposite extremes being equally unfair, we at once see that a society of Tontineers ought all to be of the same age, or as nearly so as can be attained in practice. If the applicants for shares are of various ages, the whole Tontine might be divided into a number of partial Tontines, each forming a distinct class, for persons at or about a particular age. There might, for instance, be class A for persons at or about twenty, class B for those at or about twenty-five, and so on; the borrower, for obvious reasons, offering a smaller rate of interest to the class containing the younger lives: and the members taking no immediate concern in any other class than that to which they severally belong.

A Tontine may end in one or other of several ways, without departing from the main principle. The borrower may arrange that he or his descendants shall pay back the whole of the loan to the last survivor; the interest meanwhile being at or not much above the market rate. Or the loan may not be repaid at all; in which case the interest is higher in rate, so as to include a sinking fund in reality if not in name. The money may be for the absolute purchase of property, and not merely a loan; the property reverting to the last survivor. Another form is that in which the Tontine is to terminate in a particular year, specified at the outset, whatever may be the number of members' deaths in the interval; in this case the transaction has in it something of the nature of a terminable annuity.

We shall now see that the several Tontines worth noticing illustrate these varieties of operation in different ways and degrees. When Tonti brought out his first proposal in 1653, it presented the form of a subscription of twenty-five million livres. The French livre of those days was equal in value to the present franc, about twenty-five of which equal one English sove-

reign; therefore, the subscription was for one million sterling. The subscribers or Tontineers were to be grouped in ten classes, according to ages; the first class comprising the ages from two to seven years, the second from seven to fourteen, the third from fourteen to twenty-one, and so on to the tenth class, which was to comprise all ages from sixty-three upwards. All alike were to subscribe three hundred livres each, but the rate of interest was to depend on the class. This scheme, however, as we have said, failed to obtain legislative sanction.

When Louis the Fourteenth authorised the establishment of the Tontine of 1689, the Tontineers were divided into fourteen classes, to admit of a more equitable grouping according to ages. The first class comprised children under five years of age, the second those from five to ten, the third those from ten to fifteen, and so on to the fourteenth, up to seventy. The subscription, for twenty-eight million livres, was in shares or "actions" of three hundred livres each. Ten per cent interest was to be paid on the whole sum; and as the subscribers or Tontineers died off, a larger and larger percentage accrued to the survivors. But the extent of this increase was defined by a special limit. The interest was not to continue payable until every one of the Tontineers was dead; nor was any particular year named when it was to cease. The limit assumed this form—that a maximum annual amount of interest was named, beyond which no Tontineers should receive, let their ages be what they might, or the survivors as few as they might. No one was to receive more than a hundred thousand livres a year (which was considerably less than half per cent on the original advance of twenty-eight millions), even if he were the last and only survivor. It was in this way that the government hoped to reimburse themselves for the very heavy commencing interest of ten per cent. This mode of constructing a Tontine might be made as equitable as any other, if the original calculations were well made; for the annual rate of interest when the operation begins ought to have some clear relation to the mode and time in which it is to end. There seems to have been something wrong, however; seeing that the last survivor never received more than a fraction of the promised hundred thousand livres a year. This last survivor was Charlotte Bonnechay Barbier, who lived to see her ninety-sixth year. Old Charlotte, who was the widow of a sur-

geon, did not receive so much as the original prospectus promised; but in 1726, the last year of her life, she certainly might regard herself as a lucky woman, considering the large sum she took out compared with the small sum she paid in in 1689.

During the eighteenth century there were nine or ten Tontines in France. The latest that was brought forward by the government was in 1756; the most important of those organised by other parties were called the Caisse Lafarge, and the Compagnie Royale d'Assurance. The Caisse (fund or stock) Lafarge, was founded in 1759, suppressed in 1770, and revived in 1791. The Compagnie Royale d'Assurance was founded in 1787. Both were based on erroneous calculations and regulations; and became so bad that they were put an end to by law. The first-named of these, the Caisse Lafarge, was the largest Tontine ever known, for sixty million livres. When raised in 1791, it was so warmly advocated by Mirabeau in the National Assembly, that the French public subscribed all the money. But the calculations had been so glaringly erroneous, that the usual law of mortality could not possibly have permitted the promised rate of interest to be paid; moreover, the management was so bad, that the subscribers never received even common simple interest for their money; and the whole affair was wrecked during the stormy times of the Revolution, the Republic, the Consulate, and the Empire. The other Tontine mentioned, the Compagnie Royale d'Assurance, had nearly as dismal a fate. In 1819 the French legislature passed a law that no Tontine should be considered valid until it had obtained the sanction of the government.

The English have never shown so much tendency as the French for this kind of investment. With us, the desire is rather to lay by something for the benefit of those relatives whom we leave behind us, than to provide a large personal income for the closing years of our own individual lives. There have, however, been several Tontines on this side of the English Channel. There was one as early as 1692; and several in the first half of the eighteenth century. There were three in Ireland, in 1773, 1775, and 1777, established by three separate Acts of the Irish parliament. Altogether, there were about three thousand five hundred members enrolled in them. Mr. Finlaison, actuary of the National Debt, has within the last few years examined the records of those three Tontines, and tabulated the number of members who died in

each year; this tabulation has assisted him in corroborating or correcting, as the case might be, the mortality tables and life tables already in use. Some years before the establishment of the three Irish Tontines, the English parliament agreed to a Tontine for enabling the government to raise three hundred thousand pounds, in two thousand shares of one hundred and fifty pounds each. In 1790, the Irish Tontineers of 1773, or the survivors of them, found that they were receiving only six per cent for their money after seventeen years' waiting; either the members had died off very slowly, or (more probably) the Tontine had been founded on some erroneous calculation or basis. Sometimes, however, the last survivor of a Tontine became a subject of public talk; and his good fortune helped to stimulate others to the adoption of a similarly easy way of making money; seeing that the only work for a man to do in the matter was to live as long as he possibly could. Thus, a Mr. Jennings, the last survivor of one of the eighteenth century Tontines, lived to the age of a hundred and three, at which time he was in the enjoyment of three thousand pounds a year, the produce of one share which he purchased in middle life.

The most important English Tontine, perhaps, was that of 1789. It was for one million sterling, in shares of one hundred pounds each. The members were grouped into ten classes, according to age; the immediate rate of interest was made to vary according to age; but the payment to each person was never to exceed one thousand pounds a year, however few the survivors might be. In all these cases, Tontineers either selected their own lives, or appointed nominees; and it was obviously necessary to be particular concerning birth, baptismal register, death, &c., as a means of knowing which Tontineer or Tontineers survived at a particular date. The public did not take to this Tontine of 1789 very eagerly; the shares were not more than half allotted; and the government had to fill up the vacancy by other means. Whether through bad calculation, bad management, or roguery, few subscribers seem to have made a good thing of it. Two young women, sisters, took a share each, one at the age of twenty, the other at seventeen; the elder, after fifty-two years of membership, did not receive more than eight per cent; the other, after sixty-two years, not more than fourteen per cent, whereas the mortality tables would have pointed to sums vastly larger.

At one time, Covent Garden Theatre was the subject of a Tontine, with Mr. Cooke, of the Exchequer Office, as manager. A story is told of an apothecary, one of the members or Tontineers, who was always asking Mr. Cooke whether any of the other members had departed, expressing his disappointment by saying, "What! nobody dead yet!" The apothecary, as matters turned out, was the first to go.

In 1799, Sir John Sinclair, an enlightened encourager of husbandry and rural economy, proposed the establishment of a joint stock company, with a Tontine capital of fifty thousand pounds, for the maintenance of experimental scientific farms. There were to be eight arable farms of four hundred acres each, in as many different parts of England; two large sheep farms; and ten plantations of five hundred acres each. The Tontine was to consist of one thousand shares of fifty pounds each, and was to continue for thirty years; and the calculations pointed to a greatly improved property to be shared among a diminished number of members at the end of the thirty years. The suggestion was, we believe, never realised.

Many hotels and commercial buildings have been constructed by Tontine in France, Germany, Italy, England, and America; and doubtless some of them could show a bouncing sum of money coming to the last survivor.

The opening paragraph of this paper adverted to a Tontine connected with Alexandra Palace and Park. We will briefly explain it here, without offering any opinion of the proprietorship or projects. The Alexandra Park and Palace Company, in 1871, advertised a scheme for disposing of the property to another company, to be founded with a somewhat similar name. The new purchasers intended to make many changes and improvements, calculated to establish within the palace a museum of science, school of art, art union, picture gallery, concert and orchestral meetings, and many of the lighter attractions of the Crystal Palace stamp; while the park, after setting apart a marginal portion for villa residences, was to be laid out in archery grounds, cricket grounds, croquet grounds, gardens, carriage drives, and a race-course. For these purposes a Tontine was to be formed, consisting of eight hundred and fifty thousand shares or "rights" of one guinea each. It was one of those Tontines which terminate at a specified date, not of those which last until the whole of the members are dead. In

this case it was to terminate in 1886, having a currency or existence of fifteen years. All the Tontineers, or their nominees, who survived to that date, would then become owners of the palace, park, and all they contained, sharing the rights of the deceased members as well as their own. What proportion, out of a given number of persons, are likely to die in fifteen years, depends chiefly on the predominance of young lives or of old lives; but the scheme made no stipulation in this matter; and therefore we only know that if the plan had been carried out, young men and women would have had a better chance than those of middle age, as members. There was a peculiar provision whereby each Tontineer was to be shielded from loss—or rather, his representatives, if he died during the currency of the Tontine, would receive twenty shillings for the guinea he had paid in, or as many times twenty shillings as he had paid guineas. To effect this, the company had made a contract with an insurance office, who undertook to give a life insurance of one pound for a premium of one shilling, conditional on the Tontineers, or their nominees, being not less than twenty thousand in number, and on their ages being between ten years and thirty years. (A cautious stipulation this, seeing that young persons between ten and twenty are found to have a greater expectation of life than children under ten, owing to the fatal effects of infantile and childrens' diseases; while adults between twenty and thirty have a greater expectation than those of more advanced ages: the fewer the deaths, the better for the insurance office.) The public, however, did not apply in sufficient number to form the Tontine, and the scheme fell to the ground. Any later project for utilising Alexandra Palace and Park does not come within the scope of this paper.

To conclude. If we conceive a Tontine to be something like a wager among a definite number of persons, as to which will live longest, we shall not be far from the truth.

THE FORMS OF WATER.

SNOW AND ICE.

PEOPLE talk of women's determination to have their own way! Philosophers beat them hollow in that respect.

One inquirer, to ascertain whether a disease is contagious or not, unhesitatingly inoculates himself with the virus. An ardent student of helminthology swallows

bits of tapeworm, to learn to what degree, and in what manner, they will grow from cuttings and make themselves comfortable in his interior. A naturalist who takes up, and writes a monograph on, Anoplura, "sometimes termed Parasitica," exposes himself to the revilings, and occasionally to the kicks and cuffs of drovers and swineherds, by asking, with marks of intense interest, whether their beasts and pigs are troubled with vermin! Livingstone persists in making so long an exploration of Central Africa, as to be converted to the loveliness of sable beauties and the dignity of niggeresses fit to be queens.

Glaisher and Coxwell, through mere curiosity about the doings of the bar' and three or four other 'ometers, go up in a balloon, till their hands and lips are blue, their heart-beats as audible as the tic-tacs of an eight-day clock. Tyndall, over-fond of ices, to have them in perfection, and to test the Mer de Glace's winter movements, arrives at Chamouni on Christmas night—nearly at midnight—preferring his plum-pudding and turkey with the chill on. The snows of London, the snows of Paris, and the snows of Geneva, were not genuine enough for him. Nothing would suit him but the snows up there.

The winter chosen by this perverse enthusiast—'59—was as inclement as he could wish. All next day, the snow fell heavily. On the 27th, during a lull in the storm, he turned out for his pleasure excursion with four guides and a porter. To prevent their sinking in the snow, the men tied pieces of plank to their feet; the philosopher, determined to have his money's-worth of cold, neglected that precaution, and often sank to the waist. During their ascent, cracks opened with a delightful explosive sound, promising a letting-off of avalanches, beating anything at the Crystal Palace. The pine-trees, laden with fresh-fallen flakes (in that particular condition which causes their granules to adhere), looked like overgrown ostrich plumes gone mad.

After a cool and pleasant stroll of five hours and a half, the forsaken auberge of Montanvert was reached. The snow was drifted in buttresses around it. They unlocked the door, and were charmed with the sight of the frost-figures on the window-panes. Wonderful were the mimic shrubs and ferns. Most impressive was the glacier before them. Not a sound was to be heard. The summer cascades now hung in fluted columns of ice from the rocks.

Trifles like these, instead of daunting our

professor, only prove that the true scientific blood flows in his veins and arteries. Nothing could stop him from taking his measurements. Four men, well roped together, descended to the glacier. One of them, trained in '57, undertook to fix the requisite stakes in the ice. Where much snow lay, great caution was required, for hidden crevasses were underneath. The men sounded with their staffs at every step. Once the leader of the party suddenly disappeared. The roof of a crevasse had given way beneath him; but the other three men promptly gathered round him, and lifted him out of the fissure. It was a pretty little game of hide-and-seek. One by one the stakes were fixed in the ice, until a series of eleven of them stood across the glacier.

More stakes being required, to compel the glacier to tell its secrets, a second series was fixed across it, in spite of the boiling, whirling snow-wreaths which, at intervals, quite hid the men. Fitfully the wind came up the valley, darkening the air, catching the snow upon the glacier and tossing it high into heaving clouds, separated from each other by cloudless spaces corresponding to the naked portions of the ice. Nevertheless, bravely and steadfastly the men did their work.

Next morning, they rose with the dawn. The air was thick with descending snow, all composed of exquisite six-petalled flowers or six-rayed stars, which our traveller and others have figured, and about which, more anon. Contrary to expectation, the men could be seen and directed through the shower. To reach his position at the end of his second line of stakes, Doctor Tyndall had to wade breast-deep through snow which seemed as dry and soft as flour. The toil of the men upon the glacier was prodigious. But they did not flinch, and after a time shouted "Nous avons finis." Their leader then struck his theodolite with the feeling of a general who had won a small battle.

They put the solitary auberge in order, packed up, and shot, by glissade, down the steep slopes of La Filia to the ice-vault of the Arveiron—a slide to make London boys die of envy. In summer, that arch in the glacier is not to be trusted. Its roof falls at intervals with a startling crash. Now, there was no danger in entering the vault; the ice seemed as firm as marble. The cavern was bathed in a strange blue light, whose beauty suggested magic and fairy tales; and then the explorer started for London. His longing was satisfied. He

had ascertained that the winter motion of the Mer de Glace near the Montanvert is, in round numbers, half the summer motion.

Doctor Tyndall has the unquestionable right to rush thus straight to the glacier. You and I, reader, less practised mountaineers, ought first to serve an apprenticeship to its raw material, snow—a “*matière première*” which, both by its abundance and its utility, might well tempt Monsieur Thiers to tax it. We know that at a very remarkable point of temperature—thirty-two degrees of Fahrenheit, or zero of the centigrade scale—water ceases to be liquid and becomes solid, exactly like a metal which has cooled a little lower than its point of fusion. Snow is frozen, or cooled and hardened, mist. The vesicles of water suspended in the air are solidified into particles or filaments of ice, which, obeying the laws of crystallisation, combine at angles of sixty degrees (the sixth part of a circle) and so form, always on the same geometrical plan, patterns of a beauty and variety which can only be expressed by graphic illustration. The atoms of all substances, when allowed free play, build themselves into definite and mostly beautiful forms, called crystals. Iron, gold, lead, sulphur, melted and permitted to cool gradually, all show this crystallising power. The metal bismuth exhibits it in a particularly striking manner. Properly fused and solidified, it forms self-built crystals of great size and beauty. Sugar dissolved in water, yields, by evaporation, the well-known crystals of sugar-candy. Years ago, it was the fashion to make chimney-ornaments by means of differently coloured solutions of alum crystallised on iron cinders. The diamond is crystallised carbon. All precious stones, as the ruby and the emerald, are examples of this crystallising power.

Now, besides the force of gravitation, which causes the apple to fall to the ground and endows every particle of matter with an attraction for every other particle; besides this force, there exist the forces of crystallisation, which are much more complex. In this case, as Doctor Tyndall has so clearly stated it, the ultimate particles of matter, inconceivably small as they are, show themselves possessed of attractive and repellent poles (please note this fact), by whose mutual action the shape and structure of the crystal are determined.

Every magnet, we know, possesses two poles, and if iron filings be scattered over a magnet, each particle of iron becomes endowed with two poles. Suppose, now, such particles devoid of weight, and floating in

our atmosphere, what must occur when they come near each other? Manifestly the repellent poles will retreat from each other, while the attractive poles will approach, and finally lock themselves together. You have now only to imagine the molecules of water in calm cold air to be gifted with poles of this description, which compel the particles to arrange themselves in a definite order, and you have before your mind's eye the unseen architecture which produces the beautiful crystals of snow. In calm air the icy particles build themselves into stellar shapes, each star possessing six rays. Although this type is invariable, the variety of details of the snow-stars is infinite, as you will see by catching snow-flakes on your coat-sleeve, and inspecting them with a magnifying glass.

But what wonderful work is going on in the atmosphere during the formation and descent of every snow shower! What building power is brought into play! How imperfect the production of human hands compared with those of what some call the blind forces of nature!

“But who,” eloquently asks Doctor Tyndall, “ventures to call the forces of nature blind? In reality, when we speak thus we are describing our own condition. The blindness is ours, and what we really ought to say and to confess is that our powers are absolutely unable to comprehend either the origin or the end of the operations of nature.”

Snows lying on very lofty mountain chains have been accused of evil deeds, for which they are at least only partially answerable. The uneasy sensations felt at great altitudes were noticed and described in the fifteenth century as “*mal de montagne*,” (mountain sickness) just as we attribute to the sea the qualms which Mr. Bessemer promises to allay in cases where the purse suffices to pay the stomach's ransom. Since De Saussure's time mountain sickness is charged, not to the mountain, but to the rarefaction of the air. The mountain has only this to do with it: The explorer who mounts an Alpine peak by the unassisted force of his own proper muscles is much sooner exhausted and disabled than the aéronaut who sits motionless in the car of his balloon, and attains great heights without the least exertion. While mounting the final slope of Mont Blanc, De Saussure was obliged to stop and take breath every fifteen or sixteen steps, and at each third halt had to sit to do it.

Nevertheless, Boussingault is of opinion

that, on vast fields of snow, the ordinary effects of rarefied air are increased by an emission of vitiated air under the action of the solar rays. This notion rests on one of Saussure's experiments, who found the air disengaged from the pores or interstices of snow less charged with oxygen than that of the surrounding atmosphere. In certain deep and close valleys on the upper part of Mont Blanc—in the Corridor, for instance—such uneasiness is generally felt in going up them, that the guides long believed this portion of the mountain to be poisoned by some mephitic exhalation. Consequently, at present, when the weather permits, they pass by the Arête des Bosses, where a keener air causes the physiological disturbances to be less severely felt.

Icicles are a pretty paradox, formed by the process of freezing in sunshine hot enough to melt snow, blister the human skin, and even, when concentrated, to burn up the human body itself. Icicles result from the fact that air is all but completely transparent to the heat rays emitted by the sun, that is, such rays pass through the air without warming it. Only the scanty fraction of rays to which air is not transparent expend their force in raising its temperature.

The warm puffs of the summer breeze are not heated directly by the sun itself, but by the earth and the objects on it which the sun has previously warmed. The truth of this is sensibly felt on entering a town, after sunset, from the open country, in sunshiny weather. The same difference of temperature is never felt at the close of a cloudy day. This cause is one of the reasons why the air on a mountain top is colder than the air at its foot. The air on high mountains may be intensely cold, while a burning sun is overhead. The solar rays which, striking on the human skin, are almost intolerable, are incompetent to heat the air sensibly, and we have only to withdraw into perfect shade, to feel the chill of the atmosphere.

A joint of meat might be roasted before a fire, the air around the joint being cold as ice. If you light a fire in a large room it is not the fire which immediately warms the air in that room. The fire warms the walls and the furniture, which then warm the air by their contact; and the nearer the walls and the furniture are to the fire the sooner the room (that is, the air in it) is thoroughly warmed.

Snow is one of the many objects which absorb and are warmed by the solar heat. On a sunny day you may see the summits

of the high Alps glistening with the water of liquefaction, while the air above and around the mountains may be many degrees below the freezing point. The same thing happens to the snow upon your house-roof. The sun plays upon it, and melts it. The water trickles to the eaves, and hangs in a drop. If the eaves are in the shade, or in declining sunshine, or the air intensely cold with a brilliant sun, the drop, instead of falling, congeals. An infant icicle is formed. Other drops and driblets succeed, which both thicken it at the root and lengthen it. The drainage from the snow, after sunshine is gone, continues to produce icicles, until the flow of water is stopped by the frost. In the Alps, Doctor Tyndall tells us, when the liquefaction is copious and the cold intense, icicles grow to an enormous size. Over the edges (mostly the southern edges) of the chasms, hangs a coping of snow, and from this depend, like stalactites, rows of transparent icicles, ten, twenty, thirty feet long, constituting one of the most beautiful features of the higher crevasses. But an icicle would be incomprehensible if we did not know that the solar beams may pass through the air, and still leave it at an icy temperature.

Hail is another form of water, which we cannot regard with indifference when the heavens are pelting us with solid missiles. I have seen a whole city, covered with stout red tiles, unroofed by a single hailstorm. What became of the windows it is needless to state. Glaziers were in request for weeks afterwards. Like rain, hail is formed when two or more strata of clouds overlies one another, but with a difference in their respective physical conditions.

Hail is produced during tempests, when the temperature, very high at the surface of the earth, decreases rapidly at loftier altitudes. In that case the upper clouds consist of icy particles, the middle strata of watery vesicles below the freezing point, and the lower strata of vesicles above the freezing point. Usually those clouds travel in different directions, and hail is produced when a conflict of opposing winds compels a mixture of clouds of such different temperatures. The rain-drops resulting, instantly frozen, have the time, during their fall, to increase in size by the condensation of water on their surface, and not seldom, by combination, to unite into large and destructive hailstones.

The formation of hailstones is always rapid. The clouds from which they fall are never spread over a very wide area.

Sailing before the wind, they pound and riddle strips of land often less than a mile, and rarely ten miles, wide, although the length of the strips passed over is sometimes considerable. Hailstones have been picked up weighing more than half a pound avoirdupois. In some instances, this weight, on credible authority, has been very much exceeded. On such occasions, it is not surprising that trees should be stripped of their leaves and branches, the larger animals mutilated, "small deer" and game killed outright. The greater the development of electricity in a tempest, the greater is the tendency to a downfall of hail. Hail occurs principally in summer, and in the afternoon; namely, under the meteorological conditions that have just been mentioned—great heat at the surface of the soil, rapidly diminishing higher up in the air, with strong cloud-evaporation under the action of the sun. Nevertheless, as the simple conflict of an upper very cold wind with a very hot one raised to the same lofty region, may bring about the formation of hail, it sometimes falls in winter, and sometimes in the night; but those are the exceptions rather than the rule.

As water, during its metamorphosis into snow, assumes a beautiful star-like form, so does the dissection of ice, by heat, prove that it possesses a similar structure. The architecture of the ice over which we skate is quite as wonderful as the flowers of the snow. All our lake ice is built up of six-rayed stars wonderfully interlaced. To see them, take a slab of pond ice, and place it in the path of a concentrated sunbeam. But ice and water are so optically alike, that unless the light fall properly upon the flowers, you will not detect them. Catching the right angle of illumination, from separate spots of the ice little shining points are seen to sparkle forth. Every one of those points is surrounded by a beautiful liquid flower with six petals, lying in all cases parallel to the surface of freezing. The central spot is a vacuum. Ice swims on water because, bulk for bulk, it is lighter than water; so that when ice is melted it shrinks in size. The liquid flowers cannot then occupy the whole space of the ice melted. A little empty space is formed in the centre of the flowers, and this space, or rather its surface, shines in the sun like burnished silver.

Doctor Tyndall's treatise, *The Forms of Water* (which suggested, and has helped to write, this paper), is especially full, clear, and satisfactory on that very curious phase of water, the glacier. There he is at

home—as he is, indeed, in every branch of his subject; for he never pretends to explain what he does not know full well himself. But the glacier is his playmate, his hobby-horse, his love.

That singular product of nature shall be left here intact—with a strong recommendation to the reader to possess *The Forms of Water* as a pocket-book. If he is projecting a peep at the high Alps or the high latitudes where glaciers are also to be found, it is an indispensable as well as a portable companion. If he indulges no such thoughts at present, perhaps it will excite in him that very pardonable desire.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL TREASURE," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XVIII. FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

MR. NAGLE always stood a little in awe of the cold and haughty reserve of his daughter Corinna in matters that concerned her dignity or that of the family. He fully expected that the result of the evening's work would be declared to him, and that he would go to bed the future father-in-law of the "illustrious millionaire." On the following morning he broke out with:

"Well, Corry, love, out with the news. You've 'snaffled' him at last? A kiss to your father, future Mrs. D.!"

"I have no news of the kind you mean, papa," she answered, coldly; "nor is it likely you will ever hear news of the sort you wish for."

"No news," he repeated, in wonder. "What d'ye mean, girl? Why, the man's in love with you; the whole town sees it. What nonsense you do go on with."

"A delusion," said she; "one more added to the many that have done us so much mischief in our course through life. I tell you, papa, he does not think of me, nor I of him. You must put the whole idea aside."

"Ridiculous! Preposterous! Fiddle-dedee!" were the only incoherent words that suggested themselves to Mr. Nagle.

"No doubt you are right, father. But I cannot be made the victim of the gossips of this place, be pointed at as the scheming, intriguing girl, who, with her family, wished to take in the rich man. It has gone on too long. He himself, if he does not already, would despise me later, for he would never believe that I could really love him for himself."

"And who the deuce cares——" was beginning Mr. Nagle, but he was checked by the severe look on his child's face.

"I care, if you wish to ask the question. But it is no matter now. The Brickford gossips shall have little to talk about in future."

"What idiotic stuff this is," said Mr. Nagle, in a fury. "D'ye mean to tell me you are going to take up with that young snapperjack?"—this strange word was born of sudden wedlock in Mr. Nagle's brain, of two other words, "whipper-snapper" and "skipjack"—"that young snapperjack, who has nothing in the world but the coat on his back? D'ye mean to tell me that?"

"No," said Corinna, haughtily. "But all this must henceforth be changed. It is your interest, no doubt, to keep up your friendship with him. I cannot interfere in that. But as regards myself, I cannot go through this humiliating rôle any longer. I am weary of it. Now, will you understand me, father? From this day it must all end. You have secured whatever aims you have had in view by my means, though I blush that I should have lent myself to such things."

"This is absurd and incomprehensible," said Mr. Nagle, quite beside himself with impatience. "What's at the bottom of it? what does it mean?"

"It is perplexing, I know, after the way in which I have behaved; but one of these days, perhaps, I may tell you."

Mr. Nagle always felt that when his daughter spoke in this tone, it was to be an ultimatum. He was inexpressibly disappointed, "put out," and bewildered; such a blow when he thought everything was settled so nicely, and going on "so swimmingly." He was, however, of a very buoyant temper, and before the day was over would be reconciled to the idea. He was now on such free and familiar terms with his "opulent friend," as he called him, that he was entitled to sound him on this mysterious subject. He repaired at once to his house, and found his "opulent friend" threading the mazes of a quartet, assisted by a German musician or two. Mr. Doughty received him good-naturedly, but with a change in his manner from the old easy-going and tolerant fashion.

"I really fear," said Mr. Nagle, "that Corinna has been going on with some of her nonsense. You are not displeased? And you must not mind her—girls are so absurd now-a-days."

The other smiled at this odd speech.

"Now, you must not be severe on my protégée. I make it a point. The truth is, I have been behaving very thoughtlessly and selfishly, and it did not occur to me till last night, when I saw that my hearty interest in her has been turned by the good people of this place into a source of annoyance. I ought to have thought of this, as I am older, and supposed to have more sense—I say supposed, for I can't claim to possess it."

Braham's favourite pupil was quite taken back at the candour of this confession. He was also hurt, and though the reader may have hitherto taken him for a trimming, obsequious character, that would accept any treatment, he had still a certain sense of pride.

"Then I must say, Mr. Doughty, that I do think it was scarcely fair to expose my child to such a misconception. Here, for days and weeks she is seen with you, while your devotion to her in public and private has been so marked as to be unmistakable. Now it appears that this is all—er"—and Mr. Nagle stopped, much embarrassed for a suitable word. "Moonshine" would have been the expression in his own family circle.

"Platonic?" suggested Mr. Doughty, with a smile. "But why not? How could I pretend to the affections of a blooming young girl—I, a quaint, curious oddity, with my queer ways and tastes? True, I have money, which does away with a good deal of oddity. The fair Corinna herself never dreamed of such a thing. I'll swear to you she didn't. Come, my dear Nagle, you and I have a regard for each other and a common taste. Many a friendship and pleasant prospect has been spoiled by some such misapprehension as this. So leave me out of the question, and dismiss the idea from your mind altogether."

In answer to this rather "brutal" way of putting the matter, Mr. Nagle felt he had nothing to offer. Moreover, being a person of ambitious views, he had always considered his daughter's interests as completely secondary to his own. He looked ruefully at Mr. Doughty, and gave a sigh, thus accepting the situation.

"But, my dear Nagle," continued the latter, "you should look round, and notice what is going on about you. There is something far more suitable in view. She can have youth, and good looks, and good station ready to come to her feet, only waiting the proper encouragement. There would be an alliance that would do honour

to any family. Not that I think Alfred Duke worthy of her; but still it would be a most desirable match."

"Oh," said Mr. Nagle, with open contempt, "that fellow. Why, he hasn't a halfpenny in the world."

"Oh! But he has. Besides, some halfpence may be added to his means. That is a minor obstacle. The real point is that he has won the affections of your daughter—that I know. And why not? Youth should be mated with youth, good looks with good looks. Any one who would try and subvert this proper order of things is a mere wild delusionist. Think of the alliance! rank, interest, that will do a great deal; and as for money, is not the world full of friends, who will see that young people, marrying for love, and on nothing, shall not be unprovided for? It is a grand opening, my dear Nagle. Besides, we must look to this. We cannot allow a beautiful and innocent girl to be trifled with; to be talked of by the free-and-easy gossips of the place, to be made a plaything of by a young gentleman of condition, for his amusement during leave of absence from his regiment. He must, at least, be made to pay her the compliment of an offer of his hand: an offer with which the young lady can deal as she thinks proper."

Mr. Nagle, quite carried away by this eloquence, seized his patron's hand, declaring: "Right, sir! No man shall ever trifle with my daughter. He shall do the handsome thing, depend upon it. I'll allow no jack-snapper"—he was so pleased with this odd conceit that he used it again—"to come in playing tricks here. She has good blood in her veins, and is as good as any Duke among them. Though I have to thrum away at the keys, that doesn't make us lose our gentility. There's many a kerownet"—so he pronounced the word—"that we see on the panels of a pompons carriage that was won by the poor despised crotchets and quavers."

CHAPTER XIX. "DEAR BROTHERS."

MR. DOUGHTY, living in a world of music, simple, yet shrewd, retired and solitary, yet perfectly familiar with the world, and the characters found in the world, had the strangest and most sensitive temper, which in time had reached to a pitch that was almost morbid. No one could have suspected that he had in his youth encountered a terrible disappointment, the effect of which had been to scorch up, as it were, all his sympathy with the ordinary things and personages of life,

and to leave him a kind of secular Trappist, who, uncowed and unfrocked, was "dead to the world." This little episode he will himself unfold later. But the second shock had left him well-nigh crushed with disappointment and mortification, and the feeling that his last state was far worse than his former one. The only comfort in store for him seemed to be the thought of that strange purpose which was working in his soul, to which he seemed to be bending all his thoughts with a feverish purpose. Was this a scheme of revenge, or some wild undefined plan of getting those who had trifled with him into his power? At this moment, perhaps, he hardly knew himself. He wished to do, to carry out, something, perhaps, just to occupy his thoughts.

That morning Mr. Gardiner, the clergyman, was announced—the affectionate brother of Will Gardiner—who presented himself with a certain nervousness and embarrassment which did not escape his relative.

"I have got some news," he said, "which I know you will be glad to hear, as it concerns those good Nagles. I have been working very hard at old Humphries, the organist, and have at last got him to go. It has been a very difficult and delicate matter, as he has been so long in the place; and I can assure you he had a strong party among the parishioners. But Nagle is infinitely the better man, and I felt at last obliged to take the matter up myself."

Mr. Doughty smiled, then added, gravely: "I suppose you felt that the interests of church and congregation must be put above all questions of personal feeling. How long has this worn-out old organist, whom you have ejected, been on duty?"

"Why, I believe, since the church was built. It is, of course, a little hard on him, but I saw that you were so anxious about the Nagles."

"Why Nagles?" said the other, coldly. "You are not going to appoint Mrs. Nagle, or Miss Corinna Nagle, to the office."

"No, no. But I mean that, as you were such a judge, and considered Mr. Nagle to be beyond question the right man in the right place, I resolved, as far as in me lay, to forward your wishes."

"It was very good of you. But you must do something for the poor decayed musician. There must be a subscription, which I shall be glad to head. Now, tell me, how did you like my music last night? Miss Corinna, I think, carried the day."

The clergyman's face suddenly became a little disturbed. "It was a most delightful concert. We were all enchanted."

"I dare say, too, you observed that something else besides music was going on. It would be splendid if my little musical attempt led to such a happy result as establishing the enchanting Miss Corinna in life. It ought to be brought about, and I don't see why it should not."

"The young man's attentions were very marked," said the clergyman, eagerly. "Every one noticed them. Oh yes!"

"I am glad to hear you say so. Though he must not be allowed to trifle with her. I think we should all put our shoulders to the wheel to help in the business. And I think, my dear Gardiner, that you, as clergyman of the parish, might do a good work by saying something in the proper quarter. You understand. You know my interest in the family."

"I shall speak to Lady Duke about it at once," said the clergyman, "and to the young man himself. It is very wrong of him to be trifling with any girl's affection in this style."

Suddenly entered Will Gardiner with his daughter, "Mamsie," his pet and favourite, a young thing of about fourteen, but looking much older. The clergyman and Mr. Doughty were in a confidential attitude, the former nodding wisely, as who should say, "You may depend on me." Will Gardiner stopped in the doorway, and actually coloured. His brother coloured also.

"I am interrupting," he said; "you have got secrets. I only came to tell you a bit of news you will be glad to hear."

Mr. Doughty received him cordially.

"Sit down," he said; "and you have brought the young lady, my friend Miss Watteau, as I call her. She is so like one of his shepherdesses."

"So I told Slater—didn't I, Chirrup? She gave a sitting to Slater yesterday, who has quite taken up the idea, and is doing her as a shepherdess with a lamb!"

It was the turn of the clergyman to look suspicious and uneasy now. There were some things, then, that were not told to him on these affectionate Sunday walks.

"What I come to tell you," went on Will, "is the grand coup we have managed for Nagle. We have routed that old imposter, Humphries—battered him out of his organ loft; so we can have Braham tramping the pedals next Sunday if he likes."

"I know," said Mr. Doughty, smiling

a little maliciously. "Your brother was telling me how *he* got him out at last."

"He! Nonsense! It was I who went to him. I wish you had heard how I bullied him. But trust the clergy for taking the credit of everything. Not content with our souls, they must have their holy fingers in every pie that is made. Ha, ha!"

The clergyman smiled feebly at this "badinage" of his dear brother's.

"It's not much matter," he replied; "as I was saying, we were all glad to forward the wishes of Mr. Doughty."

"Oh, of course," said the brother, dryly. "Though, after this, I suspect our friend Braham Nagle will take himself for commander-in-chief. Wonderful creature he is. I dare say he'll contrive somehow to get hold of the young fellow yet; though, as an alliance, it would hardly do for my lady."

"That's another consideration," said Mr. Doughty, "and should have occurred to the young gentleman before he set himself to the occupation of winning her heart. There must be no shirking in the matter. The thing is gone too far, and we must really all stand by Nagle in this, or rather by Miss Corinna."

"So we shall," said Will, tumultuously, "if it's only for the good of society. Though, to tell you the truth, I do *not* think my lad means business. You see, after all, the blue blood of the Dukes and that of our friend Nagle would hardly do to mix."

"Why not?" said Mr. Doughty, almost sternly. "I hate to hear that nonsense about 'blue blood' and such stuff. There is no blue blood, in England at least, and the real question is, is he worthy, if not of the affections of that young girl, which he has won already, but of her hand?"

"Exactly," said the clergyman, enthusiastically, "that's the way to put it! She might marry anybody!"

Will Gardiner glanced at his brother, and with a certain warmth, said:

"That's all very well for romance, but still people do make remarks; and say what you like, it's not exactly the custom."

Will Gardiner had a certain rude independence; and though he felt that his interests were concerned, could not bring himself to be so obsequious as his brother was, for the same reason. The object of his visit was to make his little "Chirrup" play before "such an excellent judge as Mr. Doughty." "She has been practising the whole week," said the enthusiastic father.

"Getting up, I believe, at six o'clock to have a private strum, eh, Poppets? Now, dear, out with your Summer Ripples, and mind, you are before the best judge."

"Oh, papa, I am so awfully afraid. Mr. Doughty will laugh at me."

That gentleman was good-natured, as indeed he always was to children, and the young lady began her "scramble," protesting that "he must promise not to look at her." She was struggling through the violent digital leaps and splashings which such pieces as Summer Ripples, Raindrops, or Cascades seem to require, when the door was opened, and fresh visitors entered—Lady Duke and her daughter.

CHAPTER XX. LADY DUKE'S CONFIDENCE.

THERE were the elements of comedy in this scene, and even in the faces of the parties. The pride developed in the eager father's face, as his child laboured on successfully, and which showed that he had forgotten all else but her gifts, such as they were; the clergyman with girls of his own at home, who he fancied were far more clever, though "not so pushing," with a kind of rueful toleration in his face; while Lady Duke, who had brought her own candidate, listened with a practised smile of toleration that seemed to mean "very fair indeed." The host himself often looked from one to the other of the assembled party with a quiet ironical glance, as though he perceived the odd competition which was being quietly carried on for his favour.

"There!" cried the delighted father, when his young girl had finished. "That's very creditable for the short time she's been learning. She's been grinding from morning till night, and she's just got a little request, which she hasn't courage to make herself."

"Oh, if you wouldn't think it too much trouble," said Miss Chirrup, with an air which the experienced in such matters would have recognised as of being well tutored in the part, "just to let me come now and then and get a few hints."

"Yes, it would do her more good than all the masters in the kingdom," struck in her father, seeing that she was faltering. And yet there was a certain genuineness in this demonstration of his. He was so impulsive, so fond of his children, that his interest for them seemed to lead him into these little devices, and perhaps prevented his seeing how transparent they were. But Mr. Doughty was good-natured, praised the young damsel, and graciously promised that he would give her those precious

hints she was so eager for. Lady Duke, who had come for the special purpose of receiving some of the same divine criticism for her own child, felt there would be a want of originality in going over the same ground, and was thinking how she might hit on something as effective, when Mr. Doughty turned to her.

"Where is our gallant amoroso, the Alfredo mio—I suppose at the feet of his mistress?" Then he added in a half-mysterious way, "that everything was going on admirably. They tell me that Nagle, our future papa-in-law, has got the appointment of organist; so that gives him a sort of permanent thing."

Lady Duke winced at this good news.

"Alfred will soon have to go and join his regiment. He can't be idling on here always."

"Oh, I see! Then we ought to hurry on matters. Everything ought to be settled at once."

"Hush! my dear Mr. Doughty," said the lady; "we go quite too fast. I was indeed coming to you, to speak to you about the matter."

"But why," said he with an amused air, "make a confidential matter of what is known to the whole town? Our friends here were talking of it the very moment you came in. Every one is hourly expecting the joyful news. I say, Gardiner, where can our young Lochinvar, who is so gallant both in love and in war, have gone to?"

"Hallo!" cried Will, noisily. "I declare, here he is himself!"

Mr. Duke started back when he saw the room so full, and was greeted by the obstreperous Will.

"Ha, ha, ha! Just talking of you, Master Duke," he said, seizing him by the shoulders. "Do you know it has been passed nem. con. that you are to come forward gallantly forthwith and do your duty like a man! No shirking, my boy, or sneaking off, to be allowed!"

The young man impatiently shook himself free.

"I am tired of this style of joking," he said, "perfectly sick of it!"

"Then beware the vengeance of Nagle. I give you friendly warning. I wouldn't be in your shoes for a fifty-pound note. Fulfil your promises like a true lover. Our enchanting Corinna——"

"Gardiner!" said Mr. Doughty, in a severe tone, "your spirits quite carry you away. You make a joke of everything. Let me beg that here, at least, you will respect absent persons."

"My dear Doughty, I quite forgot," said Will Gardiner, with a sudden humility that scarcely harmonised with his ordinary and accepted character.

"Yes, I am getting sick of this place," said the young man. "Every one is so free with me and my affairs. The whole town wishes to arrange them for me. Can't they leave me alone? I don't meddle with them."

Lady Duke shrugged her shoulders at Mr. Doughty with an appealing air, took his arm, and drew him away into another room.

"I came to speak to you about this very thing," said this woman of the world. "You see how admirably this Gardiner helps us on. He has certainly got a clumsy touch. What am I to do in such a state of things? The boy is self-willed, of age, his own master, and the people here have worried him to death about the matter. But he will soon come again, and then, I hope, he will do what we wish; for she is a charming girl, and I'm sure we should all like her, notwithstanding the disparity in position."

"It is very handsome of you to say so," replied Mr. Doughty.

"Then, you see," continued the lady, looking at him steadily, "there is a serious difficulty. No money on either side. Alfred won't have a hundred a year beyond the value of his commission, while the girl has not a sixpence; nor, as far as I am aware, is she likely to have anything. What do you say?"

"But surely, when a young man comes down from his own station to choose a young girl of the people, as I may say, money is the last thing he should look for. It is only love that justifies the step."

The lady, in her heart of hearts, was inclined to answer, "Stuff and nonsense!" but replied instead:

"A very proper and nice feeling. But, you see, we must look to the beef-and-mutton side of the question. And perhaps a young family, eh? But even supposing they had nothing now, still, if there was a prospect, a something to look forward to, some provision that would drop in——" And her eyes were fixed wistfully on the impenetrable face of Mr. Doughty.

"Well," he answered, after a pause, "in the case of a man like Nagle, who has to

work hard for his crust, you know pretty well what ought to be expected."

"Oh, of course," she answered; "but I meant, would it be likely that anything could be done for her by friends and people of that kind?"

"Who could tell that," he said, "unless a fortune-teller. But a prudent mother should not arrange a marriage on such a speculation as that. No one who respected her, too, could offer her an eleemosynary gift of the kind as one gives a portion to a charity girl. No, no, the young fellow ought to think himself very happy to secure such a priceless being, and to be allowed to work for her."

Lady Duke did not answer, but gathered her shawl about her. It was evident that the answer had satisfied her one way or the other, as indeed her companion seemed to read in her face. As she was going out of the room he stopped her.

"Just pardon me. Do you think he loves her enough to do that, to brave all—his relatives, friends, the world, poverty, everything—sooner than give her up?"

In genuine alarm: "Heaven forbid, my dear Doughty, that he should do anything so foolish. I know you are deeply interested in the girl, but, I implore you, don't put such things into his head. It will be the ruin of our family, of us all."

There was something logical in Mr. Doughty's face that had filled her with a sudden alarm, and carried away all her prudent and ingenious reckonings. A something which showed her that real danger was imminent, and that this man, so cold, so calm in manner and purpose, might actually have power to bring about this fatal alliance while she was weaving these frail cobwebs of future plans. This would be quite too high a price to pay for the chance of a share in Old Doughty's bounty.

That gentleman, too, fancied that he saw in her face, as she left him, a new purpose—a hint of some sudden change that disturbed him a good deal.

"She will think it revenge," he said to himself. "Heaven knows I wish for no such thing! She has misjudged me before, and will do so again. But the thing must work itself out now; and why should she not suffer, as she has made others suffer?"

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 220. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER XLIII. COLD STEEL.

I AM quite certain now that the impious sophistries to which some proud minds in affliction abandon themselves, are the direful suggestions of intelligences immensely superior in power to ourselves. When they call to us in the air we listen; when they knock at the door we go down and open to them; we take them in to sup with us, we make them our guests, they become sojourners in the house, and are about our paths, and about our beds, and spying out all our ways; their thoughts become our thoughts, their wickedness our wickedness, their purposes our purposes, till, without perceiving it, we are their slaves. And then when a fit opportunity presents itself, they make, in Doctor Johnson's phrase, "a snatch of us."

Something like this was near happening to me. You shall hear.

I grew, on a sudden, faint and cold; a horror of returning home stole over me. I could not go home, and yet I had no other choice but death. I had scarcely thought of death, when a longing seized me. Death grew so beautiful in my eyes! The false smile, the mysterious welcome, the sweep of deep waters, the vague allurements of a profound endless welcome, drew me on and on.

Two men chatting passed me by as one said to the other, "The tide's full in at Waterloo Bridge now; the moon must look quite lovely there." It was spoken in harmony with my thoughts.

I had read in my happier days in the papers how poor girls had ended their misery by climbing over the balustrade of

Waterloo Bridge, over the black abyss, dotted with the reflected lamps, and stepping off it into the dark air into death.

I was going now to that bridge; people would direct me; by the time I reached it the thoroughfare would be still and deserted enough.

I can't say I had determined upon this; I can't say I ever thought about it; it was only that the scene and the event had taken possession of me, with the longing of a child for its home.

The streets were quieter now; but some shops were still open. Among these was a jeweller's. The shutters were up, and only the door open. I stepped in, I don't in the least know why. The fever, I suppose, had touched my brain.

There were only three men in the shop; one behind the counter, a smiling, ceremonious man, whom I believe to have been the owner; the two others were customers. One was a young man, sitting on a chair with his elbow on the counter, examining and turning over some jewellery that glittered in a little heap on the counter. The other, older and dressed in black, was leaning over the counter, with his back to me, and discussing in low, careless tones, the merits of a dagger, which, from their talk, not distinctly heard, I conjectured the young man had been recommending as a specific against garotters. I was in no condition to comprehend or care for the debate. The elder man, as he talked, sometimes laid the little weapon down upon the counter, and sometimes took it up, fitting it in his hand.

The intense light of the gas striking on my eyes made them ache acutely.

I don't know why, or how, I entered the shop; I only know that I found myself standing within the door in a blaze of gas-light.

The jeweller, looking at me sharply across the counter, said :

"Well, ma'am?"

I answered :

"Can you give me change for a sovereign?"

I must have been losing my head; for though I spoke in perfect good faith I had not a shilling about me. It was not forgetfulness, but distinctly an illusion; for I not only had the picture of the imaginary sovereign distinctly before me, but thought I had it actually in my hand.

The jeweller was talking in subdued and urbane accents to his customer, and pointing out no doubt the special beauties and workmanship of his bijouterie.

"Sorry I can't oblige you; you must try elsewhere," he said, again directing a hard glance at me. I think he was satisfied that I was not a thief; and he continued his talk with the young man who was making his selection, and who was probably a little hard to please.

I turned to leave the shop, and the jeweller went into the next room, possibly in search of something more likely to please his fastidious client at the counter.

I had not yet seen the face of either of the visitors to the shop, but I was conscious that the younger of the two had once or twice looked over his shoulder at me. He now said, taking his purse from his pocket—it was but as a parenthesis in his talk with his companion :

"I beg pardon; perhaps I can manage that change for you."

I drew nearer.

What occurred next appeared to me like an incident in a dream, in which our motives are often so obscure that our own acts take us by surprise. Whether it was a mad moment or a lucid moment I don't know; for in extreme misery, if our courage does not fail us, our thoughts are always wicked.

I stood there, a slight figure, in crape, cloaked, veiled—in pain, giddy, confused. I cannot tell you what interest the commonplace spectacle before me had for me, nor why I stayed there, gazing toward the three gas lamps that seemed each girt with a dazzling halo that made my eyes ache.

What sounds and sights smote my sick senses with a jarring recognition? The hard, nasal tones of the elderly man in black, who leaned over the counter, and the pallid, scornful face, with its fine, restless eyes and sinister energy, were those of Monsieur Droquille!

He was talking to his companion, and did not trouble himself to look at me. He little dreamed what an image of death stood at his elbow!

They were not talking any longer about the pretty dagger that lay on the counter by his open fingers. Monsieur Droquille was now indulging his cynical vein upon another theme. He was finishing a satirical summing up of poor papa's character.

I saw the sneer, the shrug; I heard in his hard, bitter talk the name made sacred to me by unutterable calamity; I listened to the outrage from the lips of the man who had himself done it all. Oh, beloved, ruined father! Can I ever forget the pale smile of despair, the cold, piteous voice with which, on that frightful night, he said, "Droquille has done it all; he has broken my heart." And here was the very Droquille, with the scoff, the contempt, the triumph in his pitiless face; and poor papa in his bloody shroud, and mamma dying! What cared I what became of me? An icy chill seemed to stream from my brain through me, to my feet, to my finger tips; as a shadow moves, I had leaned over, and the hand that holds this pen had struck the dagger into Droquille's breast.

In a moment his face darkened, with a horrified, vacant look. His mouth opened, as if to speak, or call out, but no sound came; his deep-set eyes, fixed on me, were darkening; he was sinking backward, with a groping motion of his hand as if to ward off another blow.

Was it real? For a second I stared, freezing with horror; and then, with a gasp, darted through the shop door.

An accident, as I afterwards learned, had lamed Droquille's companion, and thus favoured my escape. Before many seconds, however, pursuit was on my track. I soon heard its cry and clatter. The street was empty when I ran out. My echoing steps were the only sound there for some seconds. I fled with the speed of the wind.

I turned to the left down a narrow street, and from that to the right into a kind of stable lane. I heard shouting and footsteps in pursuit.

I ran for some time, but the shouting and sounds of pursuit continued.

My strength failed me; I stopped short behind a sort of buttress, beside a coach-house gate; I was hardly a second there. An almost suicidal folly prompted me. I know not why, but I stepped out again from my place of concealment, intending

to give myself up to my pursuers. I walked slowly back a few steps toward them. One was now close to me. A man without a hat, crying, "Stop, stop, police!" ran furiously past me. It clearly never entered his mind that I, walking slowly toward him, could possibly be the fugitive.

So, this moment, as I expected of perdition, passed innocuously by.

By what instinct, chance, or miracle I made the rest of my way home I know not.

When I reached the door-stone, Rebecca Torkill was standing there watching for me in irrepressible panic.

When she was sure it was I, she ran out, crying, "Oh! God be thanked, miss; it's you, my child!" She caught me in her arms, and kissed me with honest vehemence. I did not return her caress; I was worn out; it all seemed like a frightful dream. Her voice sounded ever so far away. I saw her, as raving people see objects mixed with unrealities. I did not say a word as she conveyed me up-stairs with her stalwart arm round my waist.

I heard her say, "Your mamma's better; she's quite easy now." I could not say, "Thank God!" I was conscious that I showed no trace of pleasure, nor even of comprehension, in my looks.

She was looking anxiously in my face as she talked to me, and led me into the drawing-room. I did not utter a word, nor look to the right or left. With a moan I sat down on the sofa. I was shivering uncontrollably.

Another phantom was now before me, talking with Rebecca; it was Mr. Carmel; his large, strange eyes—how dark and haggard they looked—fixed on my face with a gaze almost of agony!

Something fell from my hand on the table as my fingers relaxed. I had forgotten that I held anything in them. I saw them both look at it, and then on one another with a glance of alarm, and even horror. It was the dagger, stained with blood, that had dropped upon that homely table.

I was unable to follow their talk. I saw him take it up quickly, and look from it to me, and to Rebecca again, with a horrible uncertainty. It was, indeed, a rather sinister waif to find in the hand of a person evidently so ill as I was, especially with a mark of blood also upon that trembling hand. He looked at it again very carefully; then he put it into Rebecca's hand, and said something very earnestly.

They talked on for a time. I neither

understood nor cared what they said; nor cared, indeed, at all what became of me.

"You're not hurt, darling?" she whispered, with her earnest old eyes very near mine.

"I? No. Oh, no!" I answered.

"Not with that knife?"

"No," I repeated.

I was rapidly growing worse.

A little time passed thus, and then I saw Mr. Carmel pray with his hands clasped for a few moments, and I heard him distinctly say to Rebecca, "She's very ill. I'll go for the doctor;" and he added some words to her. He looked ghastly pale: as he gazed in my face, his eyes seemed to burn into my brain. Then another figure was added to the group; our maid glided in, and stood beside Rebecca Torkill, and, as it seemed to me, murmured vaguely. I could not understand what she or they said. She looked as frightened as the rest. I had perception enough left to feel that they all thought me dying. So the thought filled my darkened mind that I was indeed passing into the state of the dead. The black curtain that had been suspended over me for so long at last descended, and I remember no more for many days and nights.

The secret was, for the present, mine only. I lay, as the old writers say, "at God's mercy," the sword's point at my throat, in the privation, darkness, and utter helplessness of fever. Safe enough it was with me. My brain could recal nothing; my lips were sealed. But though I was speechless another person was quickly in possession of the secret.

Some weeks, as I have said, are simply struck out of my existence. When gradually the cold, grey light of returning life stole in upon me, I almost hoped it might be fallacious. I hated to come back to the frightful routine of existence.

I was so very weak that even after the fever left me, I might easily have died at any moment.

I was promoted at length to the easy-chair in which, in dressing-gown and slippers, people recover from dangerous illnesses.

There, in the listlessness of exhaustion, I used to sit for hours, without reading, without speaking, without even thinking.

Gradually, by little and little, my spirit revived, and, as life returned, the black cares and fears essential to existence glided in, and gathered round with awful faces.

One day old Rebecca, who, no doubt, had long been anxious, asked:

"How did you come by that knife, Miss Ethel, that you fetched home in your hand the night you took ill?"

"A knife? Did I?" I spoke, quietly suppressing my horror. "What was it like?"

I was almost unconscious until then that I had really taken away the dagger in my hand. This speech of Rebecca's nearly killed me. They were the first words I had heard connecting me distinctly with that ghastly scene.

She described it, and repeated her question.

"Where is it?" I asked.

"Mr. Carmel took it away with him," she replied, "the same night."

"Mr. Carmel?" I repeated, remembering, with a new terror, his connexion with Monsieur Droqville. "You had no business to allow him to see it, much less—good Heaven!—to take it."

I stood up in my terror, but I was too weak, and stumbled back into the chair.

I would answer no question of hers. She saw that she was agitating me, and desisted.

The whole scene in the jeweller's shop remained emblazoned in vivid tints and lights on my memory. But there was something more, and that perhaps the most terrible ingredient in it.

I had recognised another face beside Droqville's. It started between me and the wounded man as I recoiled from my own blow. One hand was extended toward me to prevent my repeating the stroke; the other held up the wounded man.

Sometimes I doubted whether the whole of that frightful episode was not an illusion. Sometimes it seemed only that the pale face, so much younger and handsomer than Monsieur Droqville's; the fiery eyes, the frown, the scarred forehead, the suspended smile that had for only that dreadful moment started into light before me so close to my face, were those of a spectre.

The young man who had been turning over the jewels at the counter, and who had offered to give me change for my imaginary sovereign, was the very man I had seen shipwrecked at Malory; the man who had in the wood near Plas Ylwd fought that secret duel; and who had afterwards made, with so reckless an audacity, those mad declarations of love to me; the man who, for a time, had so haunted my imagination, and respecting whom I had received warnings so dark and formidable!

Nothing could be more vivid than this picture, nothing more uncertain than its reality.

I did not see recognition in the face; all was so instantaneous. Well, I cared not. I was dying. What was the world to me? I had assigned myself to death; and I was willing to accept that fate rather than reascend to my frightful life.

My poor mother, who knew nothing of my strange adventure, had experienced one of those deceitful rallies which sometimes seem to promise a long reprieve, in that form of heart complaint under which she suffered. She only knew that I had had brain-fever. How near to death I had been she never knew. She was spared, too, the horror of my dreadful adventure.

I was now recovering rapidly and surely; but I was so utterly weak and heart-broken that I fancied I must die, and thought that they were either deceived themselves, or trying kindly, but in vain, to deceive me.

I was at length convinced by finding myself able, as I have said, to sit up. Mamma was often with me, cheered by my recovery. I dare say she had been more alarmed than Rebecca supposed.

I learned from mamma that the money that had maintained us through my illness, had come from Mr. Carmel. Little as it was, it must have cost him exertion to get it; for men in his position cannot, I believe, own money of their own.

It was very kind. I said nothing, but I was grateful; his immovable fidelity touched me deeply.

I wondered whether Mr. Carmel had often made inquiries during my illness, or had shown an interest in my recovery. But I dared not ask.

THE INTELLIGENT FOREIGNER.

CAMILLE DESMOULINS, that phosphoric promoter of the great French Revolution, once remarked that "the judgment of an intelligent foreigner is the verdict of a contemporaneous posterity." It is just possible that this neat saying, like most of those epigrammatic utterances dear to Frenchmen, has in it some slight substratum of truth. An Intelligent Foreigner, one Caius Julius Cæsar, who devoted some attention, and many hard blows, to the Gallia of twenty centuries ago, observes that the lively Gaul was even then "sudden and rash in his counsels." From this

standard his descendants have nowise degenerated, as but few Frenchmen could be found to doubt their own ability to write a full and comprehensive work on England, her government, laws, and institutions, her art, literature, and cookery, after a residence of fourteen days, or thereabouts, in the neighbourhood of Leicester-square. They are humorously conscious of this peculiarity, and playfully exult in their capacity for rapid generalisation, and innate tendency to indulge the imagination at the expense of inconvenient details.

In this connexion an anecdote is told of a celebrated Frenchman remarking to Théophile Gautier, who had made a trip into Spain, and was proposing to put his experience upon paper, that the only objection to his writing a book upon Spain was that he had committed the irreparable error of visiting that country, and had thereby crippled his natural genius by an accumulation of awkward and useless facts. This gentleman clearly agreed with Congreve's Witwould, who considers learning a great drawback to a wit, as it gives him less opportunity of "showing his natural parts," and also with Charles Lamb's friend, who left off reading, "to the great increase of his originality."

The advantage of seeing "ourselves as others see us," has been vouchsafed to Englishmen in very liberal measure, especially during the last few years, and what our foreign critics lack in courtesy, they unquestionably make up in candour. A possible explanation of the general acidity of the Intelligent Foreigner is that, always as a nation, and very frequently as individuals, we are not calculated to inspire warm affection in the bosom of the stranger.

That we are better fellows at home than abroad appears to be conceded on all hands; but, although John Bull never shines to so much advantage as in his own house, it would seem that eyes accustomed to behold the sun can look upon the splendour of Taurus without blinking. Strange to say, neither the bluff old English style, formerly so much admired in these islands, nor the stiff, priggish, self-contained demeanour which has recently taken its place, are considered well-bred by the natives of the Continent. The fine hearty old buck who always speaks his mind, is apt to be designated "brutal," by the Intelligent Foreigner; while the young prig of the present day, who treats everybody with a coolness which, when exercised towards persons of hot temperament, is apt to

produce singular results, is denounced as stiff, discourteous, cold-blooded, and aggravatingly silent—in short, a dumb dog. Of course, we know well enough, my brethren, that these remarks are miserably unjust, and are only dictated by a paltry spirit of envy. There is (we thank Heaven) no humbug about us. We do not say one thing and mean another, nor have we yet sunk so low as to waste time on questions of precedence and fine points of politeness.

We are sound and true, my brethren, as we frequently take occasion complacently to remark, and if our heads be a little overthick, our hearts are in the right place; and a parcel of bowing and scraping foreigners who want to be made a fuss with, may go elsewhere, for we have no time to throw away in petty courtesies and empty compliments.

It is annoying, however, to find how often "these foreign fellows" come near the mark with their uncomplimentary observations, and pretty to see how, now and then, their light weapon strikes the very centre, as when Froissart accuses the English of "amusing themselves very sadly." Nothing more perfect of its kind was ever said, for it is impossible to imagine anything more ghastly than most of our attempts at merry-making, and perhaps the whole island presents no scene of dreariness comparable with a country fair. The people certainly eat and drink a great deal—possibly a great deal too much—but no single ray of gaiety illumines the dismal scene, and if the people do enjoy themselves—a fact by no means clear—then have they the most woebegone fashion of expressing hilarity of any nation upon earth.

Some intelligent foreigners, whose original prejudices have not been proof against the "rosbif," the "jambons d'Yorc," the "plum-pouding," the "portare-beer," and the "petit-vin Ecossais," or "Ouisqui," of these islands, kindly acquit us of innate national sulkiness, and put down English "morgue" and "spleen" to our abominable climate. How—they ask—can a man feel any gaiety of heart when a damp fog and a drizzling rain chill the marrow in his bones, and render him a constant victim to rheumatism and influenza? It is gratifying to find that we are not bad fellows at bottom, but that we are merely made unsociable by a vile climate, which forces us to hurry rapidly from business to our homes, giving us no opportunity to saunter about like the fortunate idlers of the Parisian

boulevards. The weather, then, would appear to be the main cause of our sulkiness; we hurry to business in the early morning through the drizzling rain and choking fog, apply ourselves severely to some form of work throughout the day, and, toil being over, plunge through the mire and slush till we reach home, where in the prim dulness of domestic life we drag on the weary hours till it is time to retire to rest.

Constant rain, eternal fog, and a life divided between the active pursuit of gain and the stupefying atmosphere of home, combine to "brutalise" the Englishman to so great an extent, that even on the rare occasions when he would fain be merry, the attempt results in a dismal failure. The mind, dwarfed by a narrow life devoted to sordid ends, refuses to brighten up; the eyes, dim with poring over ledgers, are too weary to smile; and the mouth, which consumes huge sanguinary wedges of meat, and untold quantities of fiery liquids, positively declines to laugh. In a climate like that of Albion, the poetry of life is reduced to zero. Try to imagine a lover serenading his mistress under the brumous sky of London, or the perpetual down-pour of Manchester! Fancy him strumming on a guitar—the strings much relaxed by the damp—while a shivering Leporello holds an umbrella over his unhappy master! Poor Count Almaviva would get his feet wet, catch the influenza, and probably lose that fine tenor voice of his for ever.

In more favoured climes, says our foreign friend—in Italy, and southern France, for instance—the night, as the Irish gentleman remarked, is the best part of the day, and man has a chance of pouring out his poet soul into no unwilling ears.

Beneath the dark blue sky of Italy, whether gazing on the placid waters of the Mediterranean, regarding the snowy summits of Como, or simply wandering in the lemon groves of Naples, man casts off base and ignoble thoughts, and allows his soul to soar into the infinite. To achieve this feat with entire success, a companion—a lady of like home-detesting instincts as the gentleman with the poet soul—is absolutely indispensable, while no better scene for a declaration could be imagined than the marble steps of a villa washed by the blue waters of Como, beneath a sky with a thousand stars. The senses naturally expand in the south, and the poor devil who dines upon a bunch of grapes, "acquires the idea of exquisite sensation" unattainable by the

gross consumer of beef, beer, and gin; poor as the grape-eater may be, he is never "wretched," while with us poverty signifies cold, wet, misery, and a craving hunger unendurable in our raw atmosphere. But our villanous climate has one good effect, for—inasmuch as to secure anything like health one must possess a comfortable home, and consume an abundance of stimulating food—we are compelled to be rich "in order to drive away the sad promptings of unfriendly nature."

Nothing more astonishes our Gallic friends than the minute appliances for ensuring comfort which abound in every well-ordered English interior. They marvel at the cosily carpeted bedrooms, the strips of oilcloth in front of the washstands, and the matting along the walls. They stare at our dressing-tables, rebel against the number and size of our jugs and basins, kick desperately against our multitudinous soap dishes, our immense sponges and everlasting baths, and savagely throw aside our numerous towels of different textures. They do not protest against looking glasses, but all this parade of ablution is absolutely revolting to them, and they accuse us of spending one-fifth of our lives in the tub. This indignation, this rebellion against a severe régime of cold water and rough towels, becomes perfectly intelligible when we see the washing appliances of the Continent, where a milk-jug and pie-dish are held amply sufficient for all purposes of ablution.

The rigid observance of the Sabbath is a matter of much wonderment to the Intelligent Foreigner, and the dulness of the first day of the week—due partly to English ideas of decorum and partly to the depressing influence of our frightful climate—is summed up as "simply appalling." Many years ago a French writer of the first rank declared that he would rather pass "twenty-four hours at the bottom of the well of the Great Pyramid than endure a Sunday in London."

It is only fair to our French critics to admit that they are generally gallant and truthful enough to praise the good looks of Englishwomen, but they invariably deplore the existence of a certain stiffness of manner and severity of style that they pretend to discover in the best-bred Englishwomen; and they, moreover, bitterly bewail the absence of "gracieuseté" and "gentillesse" (which I take to be two of the excuses constantly put forward for Frenchwomen not being handsomer than they are). It was reserved for a rarely-gifted American

to make a furious attack on the personal appearance of English ladies. This Transatlantic critic is kind enough to say that the English maiden in her 'teens, "though very seldom so pretty as our own damsels, possesses, to say the truth, a certain charm of half-blossom, and delicately-folded leaves, and tender womanhood shielded by maidenly reserves." All of which is kind and condescending to the young woman whom he elsewhere calls "the comely, rather than pretty English girls, with their deep healthy bloom, which an American taste is apt to deem fitter for a milkmaid than for a lady." He evidently most admired a style of beauty which Englishmen, in their narrow little island, and medical professors all the world over, deem a false beauty, born of unhealthy climes, heated rooms, or late hours; in short, the style called by Frenchmen "*beauté malade*"—verily sickly, pale, and faded—refined, doubtless, but owing its delicate, fragile charm and interesting pallor far more to the unhealthy state of—shall I say the patient?—than to any true refinement. Throughout the book of a man specially appreciative of old moss-grown walls, lichen-covered rocks, hoary castles, and venerable churches, Mr. Hawthorne, for some occult reason, steadily depreciates an "institution" worth all old-time relics a thousand times over—our living, smiling, blooming womanhood. Forsooth, our women are not like "the trim little damsels of my native land," they are as cabbage-roses, mere full-blown peonies, the coarse product of an earthy tribe. The soil and climate of England produce neither beautiful women nor delicate fruit. Our hothouse productions he is good enough to admire, but even these are "at any moment likely to relapse into the coarseness of the original stock."

But his treatment of our girls is what his Massachusetts friends would call "not a circumstance" to the furious onslaught he makes upon the British matron, or, as he kindly designates her, "the female Bull."

Ignorant islanders as we are, we have been wont to boast of the tenacity with which English ladies retain their beauty to a comparatively advanced period of life; nay, we are even given to extol our matrons at the expense of our maidens, and to expatiate on the majestic and Juno-like charms of matronhood. But it seems that we are quite benighted on this important subject. We are told that the British matron has an "awful ponderosity of frame,

not pulpy, like the looser development of our few fat women, but massive with solid beef and streaky tallow; so that (though struggling manfully against the idea) you inevitably think of her as made up of steaks and sirloins. When she walks her advance is elephantine. When she sits down," but I decline to continue the dreadful quotation, and must pause to inquire how it is that the author of the coarsest verdict ever passed by a gentleman of one country upon the ladies of another, should have been a native of the highly-punctilious and over-scrupulous country wherein a man's wife is absurdly designated his "lady," and her legs ridiculously spoken of as "limbs"? The "trim damsels" are, doubtless, "beautiful exceedingly;" and their bright eyes, blooming complexions, and lovely little feet tripping daintily over the indifferent pavement of Fifth Avenue, are a sight to see on Sundays, when the snobbish practice of promenading after church prevails. There is no American "homeliness" (as it is called) visible in the streets—the girls who are not good-looking do not go out, unless they have very fine clothes indeed.

Occasionally Frenchmen vary slightly from the great body of their countrymen in their estimate of English beauty, and while some are never tired of singing the praises of "*le teint Anglais*," and fall into raptures at the sight of our fair Amazons, others—older possibly—think them "scarcely beautiful," and find the physiognomies of our girls pure, but also "sheepish." The "folded violets" of one critic, become in the hands of a severe brother "simple babies, new waxen dolls, with glass eyes which appear entirely empty of ideas." Other faces have "become ruddy and turned to raw beefsteak;" but it is comforting to find that English girls now and then attain absolute perfection, and that the Intelligent Foreigner occasionally remains "rooted to the spot motionless with admiration," while nothing can be more amusing than his astonishment and gratified vanity when a beautiful young girl is intrusted to his care. Every glance of admiration cast upon his fair companion during a promenade in Kensington Gardens ricochets upon the Intelligent Foreigner, who swelling with importance struts along, raised to the seventh heaven of delight by the excitement caused by the beauty of his companion.

The foreign critic—let him come whence he may—is always tremendously satirical

upon the dress of Englishwomen, and never fails to point out the ill-arranged colours and consequent hideous vulgarity of English female costume.

Almost the only dress in which a Frenchman admires an Englishwoman thoroughly, completely, and without any reservation, is the riding-habit. This dress charms him, as the dark colour and graceful form of the garments subdue the redundant charms of our beauties, who resemble those of Rubens, save that the insular belle possesses greater severity of outline and a nobler type of head. But her walking and evening costume are hideously defaced by vast patches of discordant colours which irritate the critical eye of the foreigner of taste. When he meets a handsome girl "whose neck and shoulders resemble snow or mother-of-pearl," his artistic sense is shocked by a rose-coloured dress, a wreath of red flowers, green trimmings, and "a golden necklace around the throat, like a savage queen." Another great trial to him is to be found in the dreadful boots affected by our country-women. Why—he asks in despair—do Englishwomen appear to have such enormous feet? He is too gallant to abuse the extremities themselves, but puts the whole blame at the door of the shoemaker. Sometimes, however, an ugly anecdote crops up like that told of the wife of an English consul in a South American seaport, who found it impossible to get a pair of shoes made in a hurry, for the very good and sufficient reason that the whole city could not supply a last big enough.

The day of thanksgiving for the recovery of the Prince of Wales gave a foreign friend of mine a very good opportunity of seeing a large number of English people in review order. His first remark was, "What great feet they have!" I was obliged to concede that many otherwise excellent Englishwomen are unhappily guilty of possessing what a fair author once designated "useful feet," as distinguished from those dainty extremities dear to the eye of the Intelligent Foreigner, who, when in a gracious mood, is apt to admit that, after all, an Englishwoman is more thoroughly beautiful and "healthy than a Frenchwoman; but she is less agreeable, does not dress for her husband, and is unacquainted with a number of fine and delicate graces; one soon wearies beside her. Fancy a very beautiful pink peach, slightly juicy, and beside it a perfumed strawberry full of flavour."

If this hard measure be dealt unto the fair women of England, what can we, their coarser partners, expect? It appears that when young we are not repulsive, but that "the comeliness of the youthful Englishman rapidly diminishes with his years, his body appearing to grow longer, his legs to abbreviate themselves, and his stomach to assume the dignified prominence which justly belongs to that metropolis of the system." Our faces become mottled (is the "paleur malade" or the yellowish hue of a dram-head more beautiful, I wonder!), and we develop innumerable extra chins not included in the original contract with nature.

No doubt there are people who think a little round plump Frenchman, or an angular, long-necked American, a more beautiful object than an Englishman, weighing some twelve or fourteen stone, especially when the latter is badly dressed, as is, we are informed, generally the case. We are not so "trim" forsooth as the "dandy Broadway swell" who, shaved, scraped, oiled, gummed, and "fixed" generally within an inch of his life, resembles nothing so much as a barber's block. The men of this country are generally divided by foreign observers into two great types: First, the athletic, muscular, square-shouldered type; a sort of respectable Guy Livingstone, strong, steady, earnest, and ambitious, pushing his way sturdily along in the narrow groove or speciality he has selected, striding fiercely onward, neither looking to the right nor to the left, and crushing, mayhap, a few weaker brethren under his heavy boots, a good fighter and an honest fellow, but possibly a harsh father, a tyrannical husband. Second, the phlegmatic type, heavy, dull, overladen with adipose tissue, an accumulator of facts, but utterly devoid of the power of generalisation; hence, a man of great information but few ideas, and those few taken at second-hand; a good man this, kind, pleasant, and hospitable in his fat way, a keen man in business, but simply bland and incapable out of it, a believer in all insular articles of faith, a steady church-goer, a justice of the peace, mayhap an M.P., but a dull dog withal.

Occasionally these Britons, "dull" and "dour," make a heavy-handed attempt at festivity, and the only possible form under which they are capable of enjoying themselves is a dinner. Nothing, either political, charitable, or commemorative, can be done without dining upon it, and it is even doubted whether an "Englishman will

be able to reconcile himself to any future state of existence from which the earthly institution of dinner shall be excluded. The idea of dinner has so imbedded itself among his highest and deepest characteristics, so illuminated itself with intellect, and softened itself with the kindest emotions of his heart, so linked itself with Church and State, and grown so majestic with long hereditary customs and ceremonies, that by taking it utterly away, death, instead of putting the final touch to his perfection, would leave him infinitely less complete than we have already known him. He could not be roundly happy. Paradise, among all its enjoyments, would lack one daily felicity which his sombre little island possessed."

For a people whose consummation of all earthly bliss is a dinner, we are singularly incapable of producing a meal, either toothsome or wholesome. Quantity is aimed at instead of quality, and the foreigner is horror-struck at the crudeness and vastness of a British banquet.

The huge fishes, so much admired in London, disgust the more refined taste of the Frenchman, while the fiery sauces so often served at English tables, scarify his palate and produce on him the "effect of having swallowed a lighted firework." The detestable insular fashion of cooking vegetables in plain water, and serving them to accompany wedges of meat cut from Homeric joints, also comes in for some well-merited castigation. But there is one redeeming feature in this gloomy picture of British gastronomy—a fish-dinner at Greenwich. But even at the Trafalgar, the Intelligent Foreigner declares that he feels, in presence of the endless courses of fish, more like a student in a museum of ichthyology than a guest at an excellent dinner. Again he comes to grief among our incendiary condiments, and being entrapped into eating some salmon cutlets (probably dressed with West Indian pickles), finds his mouth converted into a raging furnace. Another dish (probably curry), works its wicked ill upon our unfortunate friend, who, amazed and incendiary, marvels at the superhuman thirst engendered by this Tartarean food. But these "energetically spiced" dishes pale before the whitebait, a tiny fish, who "in volume is to the bleak as the pike is to the whale," and in flavour is utterly indescribable, for, compared with these charming little fishes, the "smelt is coarse, and the gudgeon disgusting."

Our after-dinner oratory appears to ex-

cite very different emotions in the inhabitants of various countries. The Gaul generally likes our speechifying, and is as much surprised and delighted at the neatness of a post-prandial oration as he is by the clear business-like unrhctorical tone of a parliamentary debate; but an American critic denounces our utterances as ragged and shapeless, containing often a sufficiency of good sense, but in a frightfully disorganised mass. Moreover, it would seem that we (not knowing any better) positively like this clumsiness, and that if an orator be glib we distrust him. We dislike smartness, and the stronger and heavier the thoughts of an orator the better, provided there be an element of commonplace running through them.

Apart from his heavy and indigestible banquets, the morose islander has one grand holiday, one stupendous merry-making, a strange, unique festival, the free manifestation of a free people, with which no French festival is comparable—the Derby. On this subject the Intelligent Foreigner (possibly incited thereto by the success of *Gladiateur* a few years since) endeavours to exhibit at once a proper enthusiasm and a respectable accuracy. The day has gone by for the tremendous blunders once made by Frenchmen when dealing with our tight little island. Scarcely yet have they mastered our proper names, and still persist in speaking of Sir Peel, or Sir Dilke, and of Lord Dirry-Moir, more familiarly known as Tom-Jim-Jack, but they no longer describe an English gentleman as driving a friend to the Tower of London in his cabriolet drawn by a "celebrated mare who had thrice won the Derby." The Intelligent Foreigner of to-day is wonderfully well informed concerning the minutest details of *Le Sport*. He visits racing-stables, and is enchanted at the sublime order and discipline which reign in those elegant, but slightly expensive, establishments. He is charmed to find that celebrated racers, steeds of high renown, have their favourite cats, who alone are permitted to rest on the glossy backs which have carried the fortunes of millions.

He is vastly amused at the setting in of the Derby fever, a well-known epidemic, which spreads from the turf market to all classes of society; he loves to see the confidence of people who bet furiously on horses they have never seen. Women, nay, even children, do not escape the malady. The boy, "crawling like a snail unwillingly to school," may have forgotten to learn his

lessons, but "ask him the names of the favourites for the Derby, and he knows them by heart." The Intelligent Foreigner is seized with amazement at the wonderful spectacle of parliament suspending its sitting on the Derby Day, and carried away himself by the—till then—undiscovered liveliness of his English friends, he goes down to Epsom by road. Down the road and on the Downs he is delighted with everything, and even yields a reluctant tribute of admiration to the "turfmens belonging to the higher classes. The latter had made all their bets long previously, and many of them had heavy sums at stake; but they affected that air of haughty calmness and indifference which well-born Englishmen regard in critical moments as a proof of education and moral strength."

The good humour and universal merriment which prevail are delightful to the foreigner, and the thoroughly democratic character of the festival lends it an additional charm. For once the stranger confesses the inferiority of similar institutions in his own land, and owns that a French racecourse is a dull scene compared with one of ours, but, adds he, "There is as much difference between the races at Chantilly and the Derby as between a rustic festival of Watteau and Rubens's famous Kermesse."

Sad to say, the Kermesse element comes out very strongly towards evening, and the return by road provokes from the Intelligent Foreigner some rather sharp remarks on the fibre of coarse brutality, which assumes hideous proportions in the Briton when under the influence of abundant meat and drink, and a feverish excitement at other times unknown to his phlegmatic temperament.

On most occasions, and especially among large crowds of people, a painful effect is produced upon the foreigner by the gradual degradation of fashionable articles of dress. In this country there is no distinctive dress for different classes, and the natural sequence is that articles of costume pass from hand to hand until the fashionable garment, which once clothed the dainty form of the exquisite, degenerates into the rags which barely keep the wintry wind from the shivering limbs of the beggar. In a Kentish hop-field this peculiar destiny of English old clothes springs into almost ludicrous visibility, as it is by no means rare to see a barefooted hop-picker adorned with the soiled and faded fragments of a bonnet which once perhaps excited envy and ad-

miration in the Ladies' Mile. Discoursing of old clothes and shabby subjects generally, the foreigner feels a terrible pang on offering a fee to the lady-like girl who shows him over Shakespeare's house, and is shocked at finding her accept the guerdon without the slightest hesitation. He hits us very severely when he says that "nobody need fear to hold out half a crown to any person with whom he has occasion to speak a word in England." This is severe enough, but does not its severity lie in its truth? Why does almost every English person of whom you ask the way, or of whom you demand the slightest information or the smallest service, immediately feel his heart bound within him at the prospect of possible beer?

The Intelligent Foreigner is generally subdued by English beer. Even the plebeian compound known as shandy-gaff finds favour in his eyes. Ginger-beer alone is too pungent, but Trinity ale and Oxford "Archdeacon" delight him greatly, especially the latter. "John Barleycorn has given his very heart to this admirable liquor; it is a superior kind of ale, the prince of ales, with a richer flavour and a mightier spirit than you can find elsewhere in this weary world." Occasionally our kind critics drop a tear over the day when we sank from a wine-sipping into a beer-drinking generation, and marvel that the hop-grounds have displaced the ancient vineyards of Kent. One singularly appreciative traveller at once describes the true reason of the decline of vine-growing in England. The old chroniclers, he says, "gilded the grapes with fancy colours." No reasonable doubt can be entertained that wine grown from English grapes must have been abominably bad; but then it may not be generally known that good wine is a modern invention, and that really drinkable vinous fluids are not more than about two hundred years old. Henri Quatre, who would certainly have known good wine from bad—had any good liquor existed in his day—was very fond of the wine of Suresnes, a severe and cutting beverage facetiously alluded to by Parisian jokers when they wish to quote the meanest kind of "petit bleu."

The Intelligent Foreigner, then, has surveyed our country very thoroughly; has been up and down, and to and fro, in it. He has travelled from Land's End to John o' Groats, has taken notes, and has not found all barren. Mayhap he has spied out the weakness of the land, but then he

has found much to admire. He is never tired of praising the admirable training for public business undergone by many Englishmen, and he is delighted to think that if a second and more successful Guy Fawkes were to blow (which Heaven forefend!) Her Majesty the Queen, the Prince of Wales, the rest of the royal family, the Lords spiritual and temporal, and the faithful Commons into the air, "merely the apex of the structure would be destroyed," and that we should all rally round our local chiefs, and proceed regularly and legally to rebuild the injured edifice of the Constitution. Our tendency to abide by the law at all hazards receives from him a generous tribute of praise, while the spotless ermine of our judges excites, not only his astonishment, but his admiration. He respects our steady dogged determination and our untiring energy. He stands amazed at the wonders of our great hives of industry, and is almost appalled by commercial undertakings of such gigantic magnitude as to invest commerce herself with a halo of poetry.

He admires our horses, our trees, and our boys, although he fancies that the rough training of our public schools develops the coarse fibre which in manhood ripens into hardness, obstinacy, and tyranny. He pays his tribute of respect to our lord mayor, "and the rest of the aristocracy;" enjoys the manifold comforts of an English home, appreciates whitebait, and holds Bass and Allsopp not only as merchant princes, but as benefactors to their species. But he perceives with sorrow that the vaunted prosperity of England has a "seamy side," and that the spacious robe of cloth of gold, which hangs so gracefully from the shoulders of Britannia, is hardly ample enough to conceal the narrow vestments of poverty, and the squalid rags of the drunkard. He does not deny that we are powerful and capable men, well calculated to push our broad shoulders forward in the world; but he thinks that we crowd and push overmuch, and that the "struggle for existence" is too severe, especially in a country where sound, solid, "financial" success is accepted as the only test of merit, where "devil take the hindmost," and "the weakest must go to the wall," are accepted as popular proverbs. He seems, at times, almost to envy our material prosperity, but pities the dreary monotony of our lives, devoted entirely to work, and to the slavish observance of certain social conventionalities. Finally, he

doubts whether in the whole melancholy history of human blundering any misnomer was ever invented more thoroughly ridiculous than that of "Merrie England."

FOR LOVE.

CURLY-HAIRED Carl! Were a blithesomer mate
For a ride o'er the snow to be wished for than he?
Yet were it well not to linger too late,
The pines are in shadow, the flakes dance and flee.
Crisp on the white sound the patter and clack
Of hoofs beating briskly, and sharp through the air
Rises ripple of laughter; the bridles hang slack,
And hand touches hand. She is frolic and fair,
Sunny-eyed Marguerite, brightest of girls,
With teeth gleaming whitely and tumble of curls.

"You! Gallant Carl, so they call you! No doubt,
Bayard the brave were a whipster to you!"
Gretchen the winsome can wickedly flout,
Red curling lips and arch eyes flashing blue
Wing home her taunts. So he flushes and sets
Teeth under lips that are wreathed in a smile;
"Now truce, mocking sprite, to your feignèd regrets
At fair chivalry's flight. Give me glances the while,
And what man may dare to win loyalty's meed,
I, Carl and no Bayard, will venture at need."

Quick rings her laughter; sledge bells at full flight
Never sounded more silverly musical. "You?
Easy is talking, Sir spur-lacking knight;
Were death at my lips, sirrah, what would you do?"
Curly-haired Carl bendeth suddenly. "Hawk
Should stoop straight to its quarry," laughs she as her
lips

Deftly evade him. "Sir Carl, you can talk,
But you do not strike home; feeble sword, sir, that slips.
What dare you—for love?" Smileth Carl, "It were best
Oh, vow-flouting lady, to wait till the test."

On through the snow, for the wood shadows blacken,
The night wind is waking, the pine branches sigh.
They laugh as they fly, for their speed may not slacken,
"Now swift! Stride for stride, Carl!" Hist! What is
that cry?

Faces mirth-flushed and wind-bitten, go white,
Deep bite the spur-points and bridles shake free.
Didst e'er hear the yelling of wolves through the night?
Harsh hoarse devils' music that murders all glee.
Now Brocken, now Fleetfoot, give proof of your pace,
For hundred mouth'd death is behind in full chase.

One breathless mile is ticked off from the three,
By heart-beats that throb to the pulses of fear.
Swift! Flash along! Flying skirts, tresses free;
For death on the track yelleth near and more near.
"Courage!" cries Carl, "we've the pace of them yet.
White is her face, and her breath shudders short.
Watchful his eyes, and his teeth tightly set.
"Bravo, brave Brocken! Well leapt!" Never port
More eagerly looked for by storm-driven bark,
Than the red village lights as they flash through the
dark!

Two breathless miles! But the swift-sweeping pack
Of mad, yelling demons have gained in its flight.
Oh God! half a mile, and her gallop is slack.
Those hell-litten eyes, how they gleam through the
night!

But one minute more. "Gracious Heaven above,
Too late! Now the test!" Then his voice ringeth loud
"Ride on, and farewell! But remember!—for Love!"
Then right in the path of the hideous crowd,
Brave Carl hath drawn bridle and leapt to the ground,
And a hundred hot hell-hounds have hemmed him
around.

You little brown woman belle Marguerite?—Nay,
Brave Carl as you know, is beau garçon no more.
Those devil-hounds marked him. We fellows made play
Not a second too soon. Ah! the hideous roar

Of rage and base fear from that hot-throated pack
As we plunged, Heaven-sent, through the pines in their
rear,

Two dozen lank demons stretched dead in a crack!
But Carl, gallant Carl! oh! the sickening fear
That struck to my heart as I lifted his head,
His bonny boy-face all so furrowed and red.

He lived, scarred and seamed as you know him. I hold
No battle-marks borne with more honour. But she?
Beauty seeks beauty. She shrank and grew cold,
Slowly, half shamed, but—the thing had to be—
“Not heart enough for the trial?” Just so,
Many a winsome one fails at the push.
Carl has the little brown woman. I know
She hasn’t belle Marguerite’s sparkle and flush;
But she has the secret that sets her above
The shallow-bright sort. She would die, sir, “for Love!”

GALLOPING DICK.

It is about two hundred years since the skeleton of Galloping Dick rattled in its rusty chains on Maltby Heath. He had kept the country side in mortal fear for ten or a dozen years, before the law laid him by the heels, and justice hanged him by the neck. And ten or a dozen years of successful robbery, cruelty, and murder, were enough to sink his soul for ever to a perdition beyond the ordinary experience of sinful souls. So at least they believed about Maltby; and the unlaid spirit of Galloping Dick became by time and tradition an evil power haunting the heath, and boding sorrow, or worse, to whomsoever it might encounter.

Scarcely a winter passed without some awful report of Galloping Dick’s perturbed spirit having been seen or heard thundering across the heath—reports which struck terror to the hearts of the boldest, and silenced the few sceptics who were disposed to make light of the danger. Make light of the danger, when the most terrible fate overtook the doomed wretches who had met this awful spirit? A danger as sure as death is nothing to make light of, said the more reverent souls; and the history of the people bore them out.

Did not old George Graham’s father see the ghost, and did not his eldest son take to bad courses that very next spring, enlist for a soldier, desert, run home, and be taken from his mother’s fireside in handcuffs to barracks, and there shot? This was in the times when George the Third was king, and men were shot without more ado if they turned their backs on their colours. Did not Ennis Blake see Galloping Dick some thirty years ago now, and did not his daughter Bella disappear from Maltby with the fine London gentleman who came, as it might be, from the clouds

—and never a word heard of her again till the carrier brought the news that she had been hanged at Newgate for child murder? And Farmer Crosse, did he not lose wife and stock one season when all his neighbours foddered the best beasts they ever fattened, and gathered rich harvests till their barns overflowed like bursting bags? They had not seen Galloping Dick, but Farmer Crosse had; and who could doubt the inference?

These were the most striking instances that floated about the talk of the country side, and kept the belief in the spectre alive. But there were numberless other cases where mischief could be traced to the hour when Galloping Dick was heard to rush past the house at dead of night, or when he had been seen dimly through the mists of evening, or flying like a shadow in the distant moonlight. When or in what manner soever he made his troubled existence manifest, there was sure to be sorrow and loss; and the name of Galloping Dick was still able to scare all the parishioners of Maltby, and to work like a crooked charm wherever it was pronounced.

Down in the hollow, at the end of Three Ash-lane, lived the Miss Sinclairs. They were two old ladies, spinsters and sisters, owning a pretty large bit of land, of a less poor and hungry kind than most of the land thereaway. They managed it of course very badly, and got but two pounds where others would have made four. They were miserly old ladies, and starved both themselves and their farm. They believed in teapots and stockings, and odd chinks in the wall and chimney jambs, and such like hiding-places for their money, instead of favouring investments where you never know what becomes of it, or who has it; or instead of putting it into the land for the rain to spoil, and the frost to nip, and the tenant to filch by hook or by crook. They were generally reported to be millionaires at least, and supposed to have lined their little wooden house with unseen gold. The whole neighbourhood knew, as a fact, that they slept on a bed stuffed more thickly with sovereigns than with goose feathers. And when any stranger doubted the tale, and spoke of the discomfort of such an arrangement, the Maltby folk answered significantly that may be most men would take the discomfort for the sake of the stuffing.

They kept only one servant, and they never kept her long. For, being like birds

in the way of appetite, they could not be made to see the difference between a young, healthy, hardworking wench of eighteen or so, and themselves, wizened, withered old maids of sixty odd, whose vital juices were so dried up that they wanted next to no nourishment, and whose activities in the house consisted only in incessant maundering and pottering; which gave them just a little gentle exercise, and prevented their old joints from becoming completely rusty. Still, though they did little that was of any use, they were always on their feet; always on the alert; with their sharp eyes looking into everything, and their sharper speech that never spared a fault nor glossed over a mistake. They were bad to live with, undoubtedly; and by degrees they so entirely lost the confidence of the neighbourhood, that not a mother among them all would let her daughter take service at the Sinclairs', and the very parish at last refused them an apprentice when they wanted one. This, then, was how it came about that Madge Bernard, a kind of far-away cousin in humble circumstances, came on a visit to her relatives at Three Ash-lane, with the understanding that she was to make herself generally useful in return for bed and board, "and a trifle or so of clothes and pocket money," which they offered her widowed mother by letter, with a few fair words put in by way of garnish and embroidery.

The first week that Madge came she cried without ceasing; the second she sulked; the third she was pert; but on the fourth she took a turn, as Miss Priscilla, the younger of the two old ladies, said with a sigh of satisfaction, and seemed as if she meant to settle and take things as she found them. She wrote a great many letters this week; and among them three to a Mr. John Collette—three long crossed letters, as the Miss Sinclairs knew; but they knew no more. If they were sharp-eyed, Madge was sharp-witted; and if they knew how to pry, she knew still better how to hide. Still, three letters in one week to any Mr. John Collette in the world, seemed a wicked waste of time, as well as an abominable act of forwardness, to the spinsters; who made it their boast that never a man had dared to offer them love when they were young, and that they had not been like the hussies of the present day—with more hair on the outside of their heads than they had sense in, and as keen after husbands as so many wasps after honey.

It had been autumn when Madge Bernard had brought her florid beauty and her deal boxes, with very little in them, to the mean wooden house where the two ladies lived; thinking she was going for a pleasant visit to a couple of old dears who would make her welcome, and give her lots of pretty things, and finding instead that she was simply an unengaged servant without perquisites or wages. It was winter now; but Madge still stayed on. Had she really reconciled herself to her sordid life and loveless home, or was she only waiting? Waiting?—for what? Who knew? Certainly not the sister spinsters, with all their astuteness. If any one, only Madge herself, and, perhaps, Mr. John Collette.

The winter set in wild and hard. It was the stormiest within the memory of man; and life at Three Ash-lane was gloomy and oppressive almost beyond endurance. Madge Bernard thought the long chill hours would never pass. Within the house cold grates and an empty cupboard, uncarpeted floors, uncurtained windows, a bed of musty "oat flitch," not half filled, and no society but that of two stingy, lean, and crabbed old maids, made a not too joyous home life for lusty pleasure-loving youth. Without, wild winds and cloudy skies, sharp storms of stinging hail, of drenching rain, of blinding snow, kept the girl from her lonely rambles about the heath, which up to now had been her only amusement. It was a dreary time; and the only joy left her was when the Maltby carrier stopped at the end of the lane, and, doing duty for the foot post, came tramping through the snow up to the door of the little house, bringing her an envelope with the London mark on it, and four or five pages inside, written close, in a neat commercial hand. What was in these letters no one had the chance of knowing. For Madge, unlike girls in general with their love letters—and of course they were love letters, said the sisters—invariably burnt them as soon as read, and even stamped out the blackened ashes on the hearth. It was evident, however, that they made her anxious, as well as gave her pleasure.

Miss Priscilla, who was a trifle the more suspicious, and the keener-eyed of the two sisters, noticed that. She added to it also another glimpse into the depths she could not fathom, that Madge had got into the habit of prowling about the house a great deal more than was necessary. She had even caught her ferreting in the damp hole they called the kitchen, at dead

of night, when she ought to have been fast asleep in her bed; and she was always putting her finger into holes and crevices, and poking her nose into covered jars of mouldy fat and the like, said Miss Priscilla fretfully to Miss Agatha, below her breath. And the two shook their forefingers viciously, and said if she was on that scent she should go, ay, this very week! But she did not go. She only peeped, and peered, and fingered more than ever, and wrote longer letters to Mr. John Collette in London.

The evening had drawn in bleak and wild. The wind roared in the trees, and whistled round the house, as if a legion of demons were calling to each other. You might fancy you heard all sorts of sounds in the blustering blasts. There were sighs and groans, mad shrieks and plaintive cries. Now it seemed as if a host of winged things were flying past, now as if an army were thundering over the heath. Nature was in one of her great hours of pain and wrath; and humanity suffered with her.

"What a night!" shivered Miss Priscilla, as she drew her scanty garments tighter round her, and uneasily moved the solitary candle, which lighted the bare deal table on which it stood, and lighted little else.

"You keep such bad fires," said Madge Bernard, quietly. She had been very quiet and amiable for the last day or two. "Such a handful of damp peat as that! Why, you must expect to shiver!"

"Shiver, indeed! If I and my sister, who are so much older and more delicate, can keep warm, a young thing like you ought not to complain," snapped Miss Agatha.

"I did not complain; I only observed," said Madge, tossing her bright brown head. "What a night!" she echoed, as the wind burst out into a furious blast that rocked the wooden house like a cradle; "just the night for Galloping Dick!"

"Hush, Madge!" said Miss Priscilla, sternly. "I do not like such talk."

"Not like such talk, Miss Priscilla? In the name of fortune, why? You don't mean to say that you believe in Galloping Dick?" returned the girl.

"It makes no matter to you what I believe," said Miss Priscilla.

"No, no matter at all," said Miss Agatha, as chorus.

Madge looked saucy but she spoke demurely. "I think it does," she answered. "You are so much older than I am, and know so much better, that what you believe

ought of course to have some weight with me. And it has, I assure you. So tell me about Galloping Dick. Is he ever seen now?"

"Do be quiet, girl!" repeated Miss Priscilla, but less angrily than before. "It is a bad sign to talk of him. And such a night as it is, too!"

"But I want to know all about him," insisted Madge. "Bad sign! What nonsense! What harm can there come of talking of him? Tell me about him, Miss Priscilla. Ah, now do! You talk so well. I know that he was a highwayman who was hanged at Gallows End about two hundred years ago; I don't want to hear more about that; only about him now. When was he seen last?"

"About five years ago," said Miss Priscilla in a half-whisper.

Terrible as the subject was, and much as she dreaded to talk of it, she had the true feminine love of the horrible, and enjoyed frightening herself as much as most women. Besides, Madge's insistence bore her down, and her little bit of flattery warmed her.

"And then what happened?" asked the girl.

"The rectory caught fire, and Miss Alice was burnt to death," said Priscilla.

"How dreadful," said Madge in a low voice. "Something bad, then, always happens when he is heard?"

"Always," said Priscilla, solemnly.

"Have you ever heard him, Miss Priscilla?"

"I, girl?" — she shuddered visibly. "Heaven forbid! If I were to hear Galloping Dick I should not expect to live till morning! My mother did, I believe, before my father died; but we never speak of that."

"It would be very frightful certainly," said Madge. "I wonder what would happen if we heard him?"

"Death," said Priscilla.

"I wish you would be quiet, you two," broke in Miss Agatha. "You have made my flesh creep. I shan't sleep to-night with all your horrors; and such a night, too, as you said, Priscilla."

"Hark! what is that?" cried Madge, suddenly, clutching at the table with a scared look on her face.

And, surely enough, as she spoke they heard distinctly the sound of a horse's hoofs thundering madly along the road, while a loud cry rose above the wild tumult of the night, more like the cry of a wild beast in

fear, or the cry of a soul in pain, than the voice of a living man.

"God save us!" cried Miss Priscilla, rising and flinging up her hands. "What shall we do? oh, what shall we do? It is Galloping Dick, sister!—our time has come!"

Sister Agatha, who was of softer stuff than Priscilla, fell forward on the table half insensible. Madge, flushed to the roots of her hair, rose too, her lips apart, her heart beating fast.

"Miss Priscilla!" she stammered out, as if terror had broken her voice; "what was that? Was it really Galloping Dick?"

"Hush! not another word," said Priscilla. "We have said too much already."

"Hark! there it is again," cried Madge. And again the horse's hoofs dashed furiously past the house, close to the very door, and again the cry seemed to penetrate into each corner, and to pierce the brain of each listener. Then the sound suddenly ceased, and the wind seemed to blow more furiously than before.

In a few moments a loud knocking was heard at the door, and a man's voice, saying, "Help! help! for mercy's sake, let me in!" recalled the women from the terrors of the unseen to the actualities, perhaps the dangers, of the visible world.

"No, no!" shrieked Miss Priscilla; "we can't take you in, whoever you may be."

"Oh, Miss Priscilla, what a cruelty! In such awful weather, and with that dreadful thing that has just passed! You must let him in—a poor lost stranger—what harm can he do?" cried Madge.

"I will not," she said, passionately. "Let him in! Why, who knows? he may have come to murder us all. He may be Galloping Dick himself!"

The knocking was repeated.

"Help!" said the voice in a tone of anguish. "If you are Christians, save me!"

"No; go away," gasped Priscilla.

"Shame! you are no woman," cried Madge, as if deeply moved. "If you will not, then I will," she added; and before Miss Priscilla could stay or hinder her, she had darted to the door, and the next instant had flung it wide to the black night, and to the stranger standing there.

As she opened it a man staggered in, and sank down on the nearest chair. He was pale and haggard; so pale, indeed, that his face looked as if it were made of chalk. His dark long hair hung dank and dripping on to his shoulders; his heavy

black moustache and beard, that almost concealed his features, were also streaming with wet; and his whole appearance was that of a man fairly overcome with terror. And yet his sinister face, with its small, greenish-coloured eyes and hooked nose, was more watchful than seemed quite to accord with his harassed bearing; and a keen observer might have seen just one glance pass between him and Madge that did not look quite like the glance of strangers.

"Water!" he gasped. "I am dying."

"What is it?" asked Madge, who had suddenly taken the command of everything; "who has hurt you?"

"No living man," replied the stranger, in a broken voice! "Something too dreadful to see and live." He shuddered as he spoke—shuddered so strongly that Madge was fain to hold the mug to his lips herself, his nerveless hands just resting on her strong white arms.

"Did you see It?" half sobbed Miss Priscilla, who was now standing by her sister.

"I saw It," repeated the stranger, and let his head fall against the shoulder of the girl.

"He is half dead with cold and terror," said Madge. "We must keep him till he recovers."

She pushed him quietly back in his chair; and if Miss Priscilla had not been too much dazed with all that was passing round her, she would have seen her hurriedly brush off a broad white mark from her stuff dress where his forehead had rested.

Without another word Madge drew Miss Agatha's own sacred arm-chair closer to the fire, heaped up the peat and coal with a lavish hand, and without leave or license asked, went to the cupboard where she knew the private stores were kept, and with one wrench forced the crazy old lock, and brought out a bottle of brandy.

"Madge!" shrieked Miss Priscilla.

"Be quiet," said Madge, turning suddenly upon her with a dark look. "Am I going to let a man die before my eyes for the sake of your meanness?"

"You are good," said the stranger, feebly. "May you be rewarded!"

There was something in all this that utterly dominated the sisters; for by this time Miss Agatha had come to her full senses again, and was looking on, trembling in every limb. The strange manner in which Madge had assumed the upper hand, and the sudden display of strength,

almost of threatening, that she made, would of itself have scared them; but when to this was added the terror of the passing spectre, and the infinite dread which the stranger inspired, the poor old ladies collapsed, and sat still, afraid to remonstrate yet unwilling to acquiesce.

So the time passed till it grew into the night; and still no one stirred. For the last hour no one had spoken. The stranger sat half dozing by the fire; Madge busied herself in making up a kind of shakedown on the floor, taking no heed of the terrified anguish of the two sisters as she dived into recesses, and dragged about, as if they were of no account, the things which they knew held their richest and most sacred deposits. Then, when all was done, she roused the man, and bade him see what she had prepared for him; and, taking the candle, peremptorily bade the old ladies go to bed.

"Go to bed and leave a stranger in the house by himself? No," said Miss Priscilla, despair giving her the momentary semblance of courage.

"You had better," said Madge, fixing her eyes on the spinster; and her look was not pleasant.

"Are you the mistress, or am I?" retorted Priscilla.

"You were; I am," replied Madge. "Now will you go?"

The dozing man opened his eyes a little more. If his big black beard had not covered his mouth, you might have seen it smile, as he whispered very softly to himself, "Bravo, young bull-dog!"

"Are you mad, girl?" cried Miss Priscilla, her shrill voice rising to a scream.

"Not now. I was when I came," she answered. "That is not the question, however. Will you go to bed or not?"

"I will not!" said the old lady. "You have no good reason for wishing us to leave this room. Who are you? and why have you brought this man here?"

"Well, if you won't act like a wise woman you must suffer like a fool—like a couple of fools," said Madge, quietly. "I wanted to spare you; but you are anxious to be made uncomfortable. Don't blame me, that is all!"

The stranger turned his head; his eyes were wide open now. "Ready, Madge?" he said, lazily.

"Yes, quite ready," she answered. "You won't have much trouble."

In the morning, which broke calm and clear, a farmer, going to his work, passed

the house at Three Ash-lane. The door stood wide open, and there were strange marks about the threshold; dints of a horse's hoofs, bits of broken pottery, ends and tags of parti-coloured rags. The place looked as if something were amiss; so he knocked at the door, and then, getting no answer, walked in.

Bound in two chairs, and gagged, were the two sisters Sinclair. On the hearth burned still some dying embers; and an empty brandy bottle was on the table. The floor was strewn, like the threshold, with fragments of pottery and rags of cloth and linen; and there was not a drawer, a cupboard, a crevice throughout the house that had not been ransacked. Here and there, among the rubbish on the floor, glittered a golden coin; here and there a silver one. The gain had evidently been heavy when the robbers could afford to leave such spoil.

The farmer, who had his own griefs, too, against the ladies, unfastened their bands, and raised them tenderly enough from their chairs. One sister, Agatha, fell a corpse into his arms; the other, Miss Priscilla, was paralysed and an idiot. All that she could say, when she was unbound, was "Gallop Dick," pointing to the door. But she answered no questions, gave no other clue. Where, then, was Madge Bernard? the bonny brown-haired girl who had been pitied many a time by the neighbours when they had met her, so far better than her fate as she seemed! The country was soon astir, and the village folk searched far and wide for the missing girl. It was evident that a cruel robbery had been committed; and the honest souls feared even worse things for the only strong and possibly dangerous guardian of the house. She must have made a brave resistance; and been punished perhaps by death. So they searched for her for days, all through the woods, and all over the heath, and turned up one or two spots where they thought the ground looked as if it had been disturbed, and where she might have been buried. They found no trace of her however, search as they might. She had passed into space and darkness, and was never heard of again.

The only persons who could have told of her were a young man and woman sitting in a small coffee-shop in Liverpool, waiting for the moment of embarkation. He was a thickset fair-haired man, with a smooth face, small greenish-coloured eyes, and a hooked nose. She

was a buxom, handsome girl with purple-black hair, and a skin as dark as a gipsy's.—or walnut-juice. They did not speak to each other, but they both read from the same newspaper the account of a terrible tragedy that had taken place on Maltby Heath, with the evidence of the farmer and others of Galloping Dick having been seen and heard that dreadful night. And some added their belief that, if the dead could speak, it would be found that the spectre had had more of a hand in the business than folks allowed. Evidence, which the coroner pooh-poohed; and even dropped some hints of Madge not being dead at all, and the thing having been planned. But the young man and woman embarked on board their vessel before those hints were taken up and acted on. And thus the clue to the story was lost, and never found again.

They reached Australia in safety; but after such a perilous passage that one old sailor, who came from Devonshire, used to go about the deck muttering: "As sure as old Nick there's a murderer aboard!" Still, bad times pass after a spell, and the bad time of the voyage passed. The ship sailed into harbour, substantially none the worse for the unsuspected Jonahs she carried, and the young man and woman invested a good bit of money in a sheep run, and began life fairly enough. They never prospered, however. Things went wrong, first one way and then another; and when the young woman died—and she died, the worn-out drudge of a drunken husband, with a strange black mark on her chest that was never clearly explained away—her last words were, like poor Miss Priscilla Sinclair's, "Galloping Dick." But she added what Miss Priscilla had not said, "I have deserved it!"

A BRAZILIAN MARKET AT SUNRISE.

MORNING in Brazil—a bright, clear, winter morning in the beginning of June. At my feet, as I stand on the terrace of the Castle Hill at Rio, the silent city lies outspread like a map, and from the encircling mountains the morning mists roll off like the smoke of a battle, as peak after peak catches the broadening sunlight, till all above and below is one blaze of glory. And then, all in a moment, the grand features of the scene start into life; the boundless expanse of the smooth, sunlit bay,

where all the navies of the world might ride at anchor; the purple islets that stud its glittering surface, and the forest of masts which bristles in front of the town; the grey scowling fortresses, and dainty little villas, dotted like chessmen along the further shore; the grand outline of the Serra dos Orgoas* looming upon the northern horizon; the vast ring of purple mountains, rising starkly up thousands of feet against the lustrous sky, conspicuous among which stand the spear-pointed crest of Pedro Bonito and the mighty ridge of the Corcovado; the wilderness of broad white streets, and waving woods, and traceried church-towers, and smooth green hill-sides, and terraced gardens, and frowning rocks, and, far to the eastward, the vast black cone of the famous "Sugar-loaf" (the Matterhorn of Brazil), to the roughness of whose granite surface my gashed fingers still bear woeful testimony.

As yet, even in this land of early rising, the great city is very silent and unpeopled; but amid the universal stillness there is an appearance of bustle in one spot—the strip of neutral ground lying between the harbour and the upper end of the Rua Direita, the Oxford-street of Rio de Janeiro. I instantly recollect the whereabouts of the great market, and recollect, too, that I have hitherto given it only a hasty glance in passing, and that now is the time to atone for my neglect. No sooner said than done; I descend the Castle Hill by a series of flying leaps from point to point, to the manifest amusement of the mulatto washerwomen who are drying their linen upon the surrounding bushes, traverse a network of narrow, dingy, ill-paved alleys, the very sight of which carries me back at once to Damascus and Jerusalem, and emerge upon the broad white wilderness of the Largo do Paço, with the tall candelabra-like towers of the great church on my left, the long low front of the quiet little palace on my right, and in the foreground a handful of soldiers on parade, black men and white men alternating in the ranks like a half-finished game of chess.

Abutting upon the further corner of the square is a deep quadrangular basin, forming one of three great landing-places of the town; and along two sides of this basin runs a huge vaulted piazza, the rows of stalls in front of which, as well as the Babel of mingled sounds which is already issuing from within, proclaim it to be the

* The Organ Mountains—so called from their shape.

great public market of the capital. Halting at the corner, I take a bird's-eye view of the whole panorama; and am fain to confess to myself that, despite my previous admiration of the Stamboul bazaar at Constantinople, the Arab market in Alexandria, and the "Gostinni Dvor" of St. Petersburg, the tableau now before me may safely bear comparison with either. Fruits such as Covent Garden never dreamed of—pyramids of fresh fish, glittering like silver in the broadening sunshine—live stock in all gradations, from the bristly forest-hog to the rainbow-plumaged toucan—a ceaseless clatter of sticks and baskets, an incessant buzz of chaffering in half the tongues of Europe—human curiosities of every complexion, from the delicate mezzo-tinto of a round of buttered toast to the glossy undiluted blackness of a newly-cleaned boot, and arrayed in every variety of costume, from a frilled shirt to nothing at all—and, in the background, the clear glassy water, and the tall slender palms of the Isle of Cobras, such is the *mis en scène*.

Having taken in the general effect of the great medley, I begin to survey it in detail. To my right lies a broad flat board heaped with the daintiest of native fish; the luscious "camaraõ," or giant prawn, longer and thicker than a man's middle finger; the tasty flat-fish, slipping over each other like packs of cards; the leathern "bacalhaõ" (smoked salt fish), looking very much like a rolled-up copy-book; the square-headed turbot, and the jolly corpulent garoupa, a true alderman of the sea. But among all these, like a privateer amid a convoy of merchantmen, figure formidably the forked tail, the under-hung jaw, the huge dagger-like back-fin, of my old acquaintance the shark. Young shark is a delicacy in this part of the world, and so, apparently, thinks the portly Brazilian housekeeper at my elbow (with a bunch of keys at her girdle which might have suited Bluebeard himself) who is chaffering keenly for the ill-omened fish, which she at length succeeds in obtaining—amid terrible protestations and appeals to the saints on the part of the salesman—at little more than twenty-five per cent above its market value. As her little black henchman marches off with his prize, I bethink myself of the old West Indian story of the negro who, being reproved for breakfasting upon such a notorious feeder on dead bodies as the Jamaica land-crab, answered with a grin, "Ah, massa! land-crab eat black man—nebber mind, black man eat he!"

To my left, again, sprawls a stalwart

negro boatman, with his bare and brawny limbs lazily outstretched in the sunshine, drinking off the smoking coffee which has just been poured out for him by a shrivelled old mulatto woman who is sitting over a file of cracked cups, and a battered metal coffee-pot, at the corner of the piazza. In the black's half-shut eyes, and the intense relish with which he smacks his blubber lips over the thick black decoction, you may read the fulness of enjoyment after labour. He has been up all night, ferrying off passengers to that big steamer yonder behind the island, which will sail for England in another hour; and he is now taking his morning coffee previous to lying down for a good long nap on the warm, smooth pavement of the quay.

Further on, as I penetrate deeper into the chaos, appears a goodly store of native vegetables, whose very names are strange to a European ear; the plump smooth-cheeked abacato, looking like a pear and tasting like a vanilla ice; the delicious diabo, a cross between artichoke and vegetable marrow, meriting a better name than its Brazilian one, which means, literally, "devil;" the huge knobby yam, wearing a shillelagh-like appearance, which draws a grin of friendly recognition from a passing Irishman; the mamaõ, a kind of expurgated ginger, with all the richness and none of the burning strength; and others besides, too many to name. Mingled with these are numbers of old acquaintances—the furry cocoa-nut, the round-waistcoated melon, the red-coated tomato, the sleek Tangerine orange, the writhing cucumber, and the odorous garlic—a catalogue that might have tasked Homer himself. For these there is a brisk demand; and the whirl of black faces and white jackets, gaping bags and huge tub-like baskets, together with the shrill cackle of bargaining that resounds on every side, are enough to make one's head reel. To the right, two basket-bearers have just come into collision and upset their loads, the vegetables rolling off in every direction with an eager, joyful alacrity, as if rejoicing at their escape, while the injured Sambos shriek and caper amid the ruin like a couple of lunatic sweeps. To the left, an old woman and her stall capsize simultaneously, and the poor creature squeals piteously beneath an avalanche of yams and water-melons, amid roars of laughter from the unsympathetic bystanders. Louder and louder grows the uproar, as fresh arrivals pour in every minute; till, at length, finding myself in

constant peril of being struck deaf and crushed to pieces at one and the same moment, I am fain to beat a retreat to the other side of the market.

But in this case, as in most others of the kind, it is out of the frying-pan into the fire. I have barely changed my place, when I become aware that the din and shouting of the human occupants are suddenly reinforced by a mingled clamour of screaming, chattering, grunting, cackling, and howling, as though all the menageries upon earth had broken loose at once. I have camped in a tropical forest too often not to recognise instantaneously the various components of the music; and the different choristers, when I have time to inspect them, make a very picturesque show. Here is a very woebegone-looking "lion monkey," blending his plaintive little pipe with the deeper howl of his gaunt, black, long-armed neighbour. Overhead, a row of parroquets are screeching and chattering, as only Brazilian parroquets can screech and chatter; while three or four big, serious-looking grey parrots, in a separate cage hard by, are watching them with an air of grave disapproval, and ever and anon interpolating a deep hoarse scream, as if in protest against the misbehaviour of their congeners. A little further on, a colony of ducks, indignant at seeing the turkeys next door fed before them, are remonstrating with a loudness and fluency worthy of a Hyde Park meeting; while the deep grunts of a patriarchal "porco do mato," or wild pig, whose small, deep-set cunning eye looks sideways at me through a forest of black bristles, form a bass to their clamorous treble. Far away at the end of the line, a group of magnificent toucans, in all the splendour of their gorgeous plumage, sit in stern silence, like the doomed senators of Rome amid the army of Brennus—awaiting death with a firmness worthy of a better cause. For in this land of strange dishes, where monkey-soup replaces julienne, and where parrots are made into pies instead of pets, neither fur nor feathers can long remain unscathed.

If there are fewer purchasers on this side of the market, there are more spectators; and the blending of all nationalities is in itself a sufficiently curious sight. Lean, voluble Frenchmen, sallow Spaniards, and lithe, black-haired Portuguese; gaunt, high-cheeked, keen-eyed Yankees; brawny English sailors, looking around them with that air of grand, indulgent contempt characteristic of the true Briton when

among those unfortunates whom an inscrutable Providence has condemned to be foreigners; and, every here and there, a sturdy, fresh-coloured, helpful looking man with the light hair and clear blue eye of the Fatherland—one of those firm, patient, indomitable fellows who are silently transforming the interior of Brazil,* and annexing large tracts of uncleared forest, with the same vigour and dexterity wherewith their great leader removed his neighbour's landmark two years ago.

As the morning wears on, other habitués begin to appear; sallow, nerveless men in white tunics, looking very much like cigars wrapped in paper—pudding-faced boys, struck with temporary paralysis by the tightness of their unmentionables—fat officers, whose projecting swords are suggestive of a skewer run through an over-boiled turkey—fashionable belles blossoming into the extreme plainness of youth, and portly matrons rife with all the mature ugliness of middle age. In moving aside to let the throng pass, I come suddenly upon a knot of mulatto costermongers with their baskets beside them, breakfasting in common from a huge bowl of black beans, the cost of the meal being chalked upon a little slate which hangs above the board. The sight naturally reminds me of my own breakfast, and, referring to my watch, I am amazed to find that it is already past nine o'clock, and not at all amazed to find that I am getting very hungry.

"Pick me out something good, for I've got a horse's appetite this morning," remark I, half an hour later, to the smart little Londoner whom I have chosen from the hotel staff as my especial attendant.

"Well, then, sir," responds the expatriated Sam Weller, seizing this tempting chance of a bon-mot, "ain't my givin' you this 'ere bill o' fare somethin' like puttin' the carte afore the 'orse?"

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXI. MR. NAGLE AT THE ORGAN.

ON the morning after Mr. Doughty's grand concert, and the rather important changes that had been crowded into the space of a night, Mr. Nagle rose up with the importance of a commander-in-chief. Weighty responsibilities were now falling

* In Juiz da Fora alone, there are no fewer than fourteen thousand German colonists; and Petropolis (the Balmoral of Brazil) is literally peopled with them.

on his shoulders. Music was actually with him sinking into quite a secondary matter; and if his services as a teacher were in tolerable request, he fumed at the recurring lessons as so many interruptions. He exclaimed impatiently in the spirit, though not in the words of Lofty, "I'll be pack-horse to none of 'em." He entered the houses of his pupils like some overworked secretary of state, and, it must be said, consumed a good portion of the time that should have been devoted to tuition in easy conversation on unmusical matters. Braham's scholar began, as some considered it, to give himself airs. He positively declared he could not go through the drudgery of dealing with raw, untrained organs, and such he forthwith bade go to Dobson, or Jones, or "some local stonebreaker," as he styled the inferior order of his profession. "I assure you," he would say, good-naturedly, "Dobson is a very good, honest, hard-working fellow, with a wife and six children"—as though they formed part of his musical gifts—"and you couldn't do better than go to him. He'll put you through the dumb-bells, and the rest of it—work the Doremifasol, and all that. When you've got the muscles well greased, and in working order, come to me. I could not do you a halfpenny-worth of good now—not a halfpenny-worth. No, go to a Dobson for a twelvemonth."

"Stonebreaker" was not at all an unsuitable description of professional gentlemen like Dobson and his brethren, who abound in every town, and who, honest souls! are the very hodmen of music. They thump at their pianos with a resolution worthy of those who are breaking stones on the roadside; bring out the human voice, and teach singing, much as a drill-sergeant will slave at the arms and legs of his recruits. There were some humble hodmen in Brickford who regarded the flashy gifts of Mr. Nagle almost with obsequiousness, though he had snatched away some of the few crusts that found their way to their hungry jaws. But they hoped to be repaid by some such recommendations as we have described. Dobson, indeed, had won the favour of his patron by his remarkable self-abnegation and humility, and was spoken of in Nagle circles as "a very worthy, hard-working creature, to whom it was a charity to give a job. No one could be better as a puddler"—a metaphor, it may be presumed, drawn from one of the most laborious operations of the iron trade.

These were exciting days for Mr. Nagle,

and though there was some uncertainty in the future, he felt that he and his family were among the most important people in Brickford. He talked of quitting the "stuffy den" in the Crescent, and of taking a handsome house in a more fashionable quarter. The little memorandum-book was really filling up with entries, and the Harmonic Matinees were being established. A little circular on tinted note-paper had already gone forth, announcing that these meetings would shortly commence, and by "the obliging permission of J. Doughty, Esq.," would be held in the "noble music room" of that gentleman. Always soaring and ambitious in his views, Mr. Nagle had conceived the idea of a "Grand Conservatory of Music" as he called it, where all sorts of arts should be cultivated; where there should be classes for vocal, for instrumental music, for counterpoint, for foreign languages, for organ-playing even. His dream was that these branches were not so much to be taught by ordinary masters, as to be acquired, by a sort of inspiration, by personal contact with himself and family. It was the true tone that he wished to impart. The price of this hazy "course," including singing, playing, dancing, and, we may presume, the musical glasses, if the parents required it, and for the foreign languages, organ-playing, &c., was certainly reasonable—some five "geeneys" a year. Then "associates" could be affiliated for the modest sum of "a geeney" per annum, for which they were admitted to all the concerts, all the rehearsals, to the Harmonic Matinees, to the Soirées Musicales, to the tuneful Après-midis, and to the occasional dances—certainly a generous and handsome "geeney's" worth. It was a prodigious scheme this of Mr. Nagle's, though cloudy enough; but it sounded so magnificent that the subscriptions began to flow in. It must be said, however, that the public were good-natured and indulgent, and expected nothing very practical from him. They were content with the airy programme which he set before them, and there was beside that little weakness, found in too many communities, of looking tenderly on the family which by an auspicious marriage might be raised, as it were, from the ranks. Mr. Nagle told his confidential friends that the coming change would make no difference in his life—in the profession he had lived, in the profession would he die. He felt that it ennobled him; at his time of life, "he was not going to become ashamed of it." The old

Broadwood he would never give up. "It has stuck to me through thick and thin, come weal come woe," Mr. Nagle would say, as though he were performing the marriage service, "in sickness and in health, and I am not going to discard it now in my prosperity."

There was much excitement when it became known that the old organist had been expelled, and some plain unmusical people, who had not been fascinated by the glittering manner of Braham's pupil, or of Braham's pupil's bewitching daughter, spoke of the matter as an oppressive act. In a place like Brickford, every ordinary personage or functionary has his party of friends; and the case of this old retainer, who, indeed, had done his work respectably, justly excited a good deal of sympathy.

When, therefore, on the following Sunday, it was known that Braham Nagle would preside at the organ, there was some excitement, and a more than usually large congregation attended.

It is amazing what self-confidence will do. It was a truth that the professor knew no more of that noble instrument than he did of the ophicleide, or of the double bass, yet on the general assumption that "he had sat at the feet of the immortal Braham," he felt that if any difficulty were to be noticed it might be attributed to the instrument, or, indeed, even to the ignorance of the congregation. He had, it is true, "presided at the harmonium," in a small country chapel, and the gifts which he had brought to that function he considered more than sufficient for any "hodmen" who came to church at a place like Brickford. The stops and pedals were matters utterly unfamiliar. Yet he boldly took his seat, and when the occasion arrived, gave out a strange, discordant jumble, with a vast number of wrong notes, which he tried to overpower in what he called "a general rumble up;" and such was the plastic art of the performer, that he contrived to make a sort of doubtful impression on the congregation, and to avoid leaving one of a complete break down, so deafening and confused was the noise or "rumble up" that he succeeded in producing. With a marvellous self-confidence, he even attempted the use of the pedals, plunging his heel down on the lowest ones, which produced a sort of muffled thunder, and distracted attention from the fact of its being the wrong note. When, however, "he got a chance," as he called it, he began to flourish away in flowing and

pathetic voluntaries, indulging in mundane and operatic runs, and melodies. Finally, he played the audience out in a tremendous hurly-burly of wrong chords, wrong notes—"misfires," as he used to call them in tuition—a sort of slap-dash-helter-skelter, which he entitled a march "Religioso," but which might have been anything in the wide world, save what was musical. The result was a sense of bewilderment and doubt, though people certainly felt that there was a difference between this and poor old Humphries's style. Will Gardiner was the first dissentient.

"Why, chaos come again is nothing to him! Nagle must have chartered all the cats and dogs in the parish, and let them loose over his keys. I suppose it's the way Braham would have played if he had been able to finger the thing. But I am only what he calls a 'hodman' at music, so I suppose I am no judge."

The friends of the ejected Humphries thought it seemed "all abroad," but they were overborne by the delighted criticisms of the young lady pupils, and the applause of members of the Harmonic Matinées, who were, in a manner, committed to approbation. And thus it was that Mr. Nagle came to play the organ at the Brickford church with a most imperfect knowledge, and was pronounced to be a performer in the grand style.

CHAPTER XXII. DOCTOR SPOONER.

ALL this season was a time of suspense, as it were, and also a time of acting. Mr. Doughty, grown thinner and colder, looked out wearily and eagerly, waiting for something to be determined. The proud Corinna had her own purpose fixed, whatever that might be, but she too was tantalised by the suspense, the attendant mortification, the prying and the jealous looks, and the longing anticipations of her defeat. As for Mr. Duke, he had become morbid and even sulky, and was worried by finding himself in a position where he knew that he was expected to decide on some course, and that all the vulgar tattlemongers of the place were watching him. He was in truth a highly selfish and ornamental young officer, whose grand aim in life was to avoid being "annoyed" or "worried;" who was very well content to bestow his affections on the enchanting Corinna, provided matters went very much as they would on some long night at a ball, where all was music and dancing, bright and flashing light, beauty, youth, and

entertaining talk. It was like awakening from a pleasant dream. He found himself suddenly brought face to face with business; he saw that he was expected "to do something," to take some practical step from which he recoiled. Everything, too, seemed to have assumed new and prosy shapes. The divinity of the enchanting Corinna had invested Brickford with golden clouds; now it seemed a depressing, murky, gloomy, manufacturing place, as indeed it was. Mr. Nagle, through the same medium, had taken the shape of some spiritualised Mozart or Mendelssohn. He was the father of an enchanting heroine, and dealt with divine harmonies, and exquisite melodies—quite, in short, a dreamy artist. Now he became of a sudden a common music-master, whose vulgarity and cheap and paltry manner quite jarred upon the fastidious Alfred. That Doughty, whom he had taken such a pride in defeating, he looked on now with a jealousy of quite another kind, as one who had shown a superior tact and knowledge of the world.

And the enchanting Corinna herself, how was she regarded by the fickle swain whom she had enslaved? Had this general *désillusionnement* affected her? No one could have guessed from her manner or bearing that she noted any change in her admirer. Her own family could only see that she had the same calm, impassive, impenetrable air, behind which there was no piercing; that she seemed to be calmly awaiting the issue, whatever that might be, or whenever it was to come. That was now not very far off.

It had come to a certain Monday morning, when Mr. Nagle, paying his accustomed visit to his opulent friend, found him a little unwell. A bad cold—had not slept very well during the night. Instantly the visitor was in a state of bustle and agitation. "We must have in a medical man. My dear friend, you must not neglect yourself. Would you like Parker, or perhaps Spooner—I think on the whole, Spooner." Mr. Doughty was indifferent. He had thought of sending for some one. One physician seemed to him as good as another. So he left it to his friend.

Away spurred Mr. Nagle, always in his element when on some mission of this kind. He has a large number of brethren and sisters in the world, who in any situation of the kind arrive booted and spurred, as it were, and delight in hurrying away express to fetch this person and that. For such persons a sudden illness is quite a godsend.

Mr. Nagle having selected Doctor Spooner, made straight for that gentleman's house. Spooner was a new doctor who had come to open up the "practice" of the district, just as Mr. Nagle had done with the musical ground. He was a young man, good-looking, with glossy black whiskers, who possessed that valuable professional gift which the College of Physicians cannot impart, and which patients, strange to say, are often content to accept instead of knowledge, namely, a good manner. He would appear so absorbed and interested in the story of a patient's symptoms, that it seemed, as one of his friends or enemies remarked, as if he were listening to the reading of a will when he expected to find himself a legatee. So much surprise, enjoyment, and interest were exhibited that the patient was flattered, and conceived the idea either that he had such powers of narrative as to invest a dry subject with the charms of romance, or that his case had some special features of interest which distinguished it from others. The new physician, too, had a low voice; was deferential, though firm; insinuating; dressed well, and thus contrasted most favourably with the old-established doctors of the place, who affected the gruff Abernethy manner, and were too far advanced in life and in the profession to change.

It was natural that this gentleman and Mr. Nagle should be drawn together, their principles being the same; and Mr. Spooner, besides, affected a certain deference, and even admiration, for the music-master, as being one who had seen a vast deal of the world. He conveyed the sense of this admiration so cleverly, that Mr. Nagle assumed the airs of a patron, and spoke everywhere of his friend as a "worthy, deserving, clever fellow;" and often used the phrase, when a pupil was suffering from hoarseness or a cold in the head, "you should see Spooner." To Mr. Doughty he used the same hortation, "You should see Spooner at once," and hurried off to bring back the physician himself.

It was a curious circumstance, however, that, only a few yards from Doctor Spooner's house, Mr. Nagle should have reined up the imaginary charger on which he was mounted, and have become gravely reflective. It occurred to him that he was introducing into the sacred preserve, which he had guarded so jealously, another candidate sportsman, and an idea of danger suggested itself from so agreeable and entertaining a physician. Was it not rather

Quixotic, tempting Providence, as it were, thus introducing one who might hereafter hoist him, Nagle, on his own private petard? This thought struck him with a sudden panic, and it was possible that he might have turned back, and acted as "bringer" to one of the more old-fashioned, but safer, mediocrities, when Mr. Spooner himself suddenly came up, and was so obsequious and deferential, that Mr. Nagle muttered an internal "Pooh! pooh!" addressed to himself, and instantly imparted his intelligence. Then he carried the doctor off at once to his opulent friend's house, where the usual formalities, tactual, visual, and scriptural: that is, of pulse feeling, respectful tongue examination, and prescription writing: were gone through. Mr. Doughty tolerated these functions with more than his usual indifference, and Mr. Nagle again said, "Pooh! pooh!" to himself in contemptuous rebuke. After the doctor's departure, the patient detained his friend Nagle for a little chat.

"I can hardly speak," he said, "with this cold. But tell me how are they all at home."

"Corinna will be dreadfully distressed when I tell her of this—quite grieved about you."

"Nonsense, my dear sir; she has something more engrossing to think of than a middle-aged gentleman's cold."

"Middle-aged," exclaimed Mr. Nagle, with a horror, as though some one had stated in his presence that his opulent friend was a malefactor, had forged bonds, &c. "Why, boyish, boyish, my dear sir, would be more the word; boyish in mind, and body."

"Thank you for the compliment, which is well meant, though boyishness and middle age make a comic mixture. Well, everything is going well in the inamorato direction?"

Mr. Nagle scratched his chin uneasily.

"'Pon my word I don't know what to say. There is a haziness about the young man, and Corinna is so dignified, that really, though she is my own child, I don't like to ask her about the business. It's unsatisfactory somehow, and I'd really like——"

"To see something satisfactory. Well we must only wish her plenty of valentines—to-day is Saint Valentine's Day, you know. Have the young men of Brickford been pouring in verses and odes? No?"

"My dear friend, there it is. Girls are such utter fools with their fiddle-de-dee. I know the man that I believe her heart to

be set upon. There's some unlucky malintendew somewhere, and things won't go straight."

"You must only try and straighten them," said Mr. Doughty, indifferently. "Good-bye."

CHAPTER XXIII. THE LAMPOON.

As Mr. Doughty had said, this was the month of February, and that particular day in the month of February which some millions of rational beings dedicate to overloading the Post Office with strangely-painted cut-out cards and worse doggrel. This, perhaps the most idiotic of all British customs, was not neglected in Brickford, and in the morning before Mr. Nagle had paid his visit to his friend, the postman had left quite a packet of effusions of this kind. When Mr. Nagle returned he found his daughter cold and haughty, her eyes gloomy with a stern determination and indignation. Mr. Nagle was in high good humour. "What," he said, "not enough valentines, Corry, dear?"

"It is too much," she said, with infinite scorn. "I cannot endure it any longer. Has it come to this now, that any creature of the place can make free with our name?"

"In the name of all the discords—what do ye mean, Corry?"

"I mean that the end of all this plotting and finessing is that we have lost in respect, that my name is a by-word. I cannot endure it longer. It is cruel and unfair. Raise yourself in the world, father, any way you can, but do not use your daughter to help you. But it serves us right."

"I don't know what you are talking about," said Mr. Nagle, impatiently. "I am worried to death among you all. I tell you I do everything for the best——"

"Is that for the best," said Corinna, in her stateliest manner, throwing down a paper upon the table. "It is degrading! I feel like some miserable adventuress; but as I said, it only serves us right."

Mr. Nagle took up the paper. It was a copy of verses, and he read as follows:

Oh, charming Miss Nagle,
Are things quite en règle,
Is money or love to be winner?
There's age, which is cold,
And youth without gold,
At the feet of the lovely Corinna.

There's D—ghty and D—ke,
To which do you look?
One handsome, the other much thinner,
To fall 'twixt two stools
Is the fate of some fools,
So keep this in mind, fair Corinna.

Young D—ke will be doughty,
 Duke D—ghty will flout ye,
 As surely as I am a sinner,
 That lordly young D—ke
 You never will hook,
 Do your best, enchanting Corinna!

Mr. Nagle perused this doggrel to the end. "Uncommonly free and impertinent," he said.

"They are welcome," answered Corinna, "for we have deserved it. We have invited it. And you, you papa, are the cause of this degradation for your child. What can we expect when we attempt to go out of our station?"

"It is very fine laying it on me," said Mr. Nagle. "You were making up to this young spark, who has no more honourable intentions about him than I have. If you hadn't offended Mr. Doughty——"

"Ah! that was it," said Corinna, suddenly snatching the paper; "a most noble revenge truly—to stab at a poor girl in the dark. I could not have believed it of him. I thought he would be generous, at least, if he could not understand me."

"Who, Doughty? ridiculous! He write lampoons, nothing of the kind; though, indeed, 'pon my word, he did ask me this morning had you received any verses."

"I was sure of it," said Corinna. "None of the poor hinds in this place have sense enough to put such rhymes together."

"Still, he wouldn't describe himself in that way; as 'Old Doughty,' and all that——"

"That's exactly what he would do," said Corinna. "But all I ask is this, and I implore it of you. Do not let me be dragged through the mire in this way—be offered to the best bidder to be rejected contemptuously any more. I cannot bear it. It must not be. If you love your daughter, respect her, or wish her to be respected, you will leave me out of these wretched, restless plans. It is contemptible, unworthy, to be using your child as a stepping-stone."

"Oh, fiddle-de-dee!" said Mr. Nagle. "I can't have this nonsense! I want no stepping-stones, as you call 'em. My name and reputation are pretty well established. I have fought my own way, ma'am. Ask any one who Braham Nagle is. I am not quite so foolish as you would make me out. The whole failure is owing to your own

fault. We might have had Old Doughty at this moment, I firmly believe, only for your high-flown romance."

"Yes," said Corinna, "and at this moment he would have despised me, and have been persuaded that we wanted him only for his money. I could not have endured that."

"More fool you; and what are you to endure now? To be laughed at by all the envious young women of the place."

"But it all must end, father. I withdraw. We must give up all these plans, which, indeed, I have only tolerated for your sake. I wish now to work for my bread, to confine myself to our own proper station."

Had the immortal Braham risen through a trap-door suddenly and stood beside him, Mr. Nagle could not have been more astonished. "Why this is all moonshine and——and——" the word would not come, so he had to use his favourite one—"all fiddle-de-dee."

"I wish," said Corinna, not heeding this familiar phrase, "to accept the proposal which I declined before, and go and be a public singer on the stage. I did not like it at first, but now I see I must do it."

"Well, of all the things in the world I ever heard!" was the only exclamation Mr. Nagle could find, as he saw in her face that calm, but not hostile look of determination which had so often before checked his angriest expostulations.

As she quitted the room, his eyes fell on the obnoxious "lampoon," as he called it to himself. This outrage had really made him uncomfortable; it was low and mean; an undignified proceeding, a "gross liberty" in short. As for its coming from Doughty, that was a mere girl's delusion; it was more like Mrs. Will Gardiner, or the ejected Humphries. Most probably, though, "that woman"—he was always as it were denouncing an offender with a "that," like a finger of scorn. There was a hard hostility about the lady he never could relish; a cold indifference even to his conjuring with the mighty name of Braham. Much wondering at these changes, Mr. Nagle put on his hat with some depression of spirit, and went away to preside at one of the meetings of what he called a "Mat.," that is, one of the Harmonic Matinées.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

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A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 221. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER XLIV. AN OMINOUS VISIT.

I HAVE sometimes felt that, even without a revelation, we might have discovered that the human race was born to immortality. Death is an intrusion here. Children can't believe in it. When they see it first, it strikes them with curiosity and wonder. It is a long time before they comprehend its real character, or believe that it is common to all; to the end of our days we are hardly quite sincere when we talk of our own deaths.

Seeing mamma better, I thought no more of her danger, than if the angel of death had never been within our doors, and I had never seen the passing shadow of that spectre in her room.

As my strength returned, I grew more and more gloomy and excited. I was haunted by never-slumbering, and very reasonable, fore-castings of danger. In the first place I was quite in the dark as to whether Monsieur Droqville was dangerously or mortally hurt, and I had no way of learning anything about him. Rebecca, it is true, used to take in, for her special edification, a Sunday paper, in which all the horrors of the week were displayed, and she used to con it over very regularly, day after day, till the next number made its appearance. If Monsieur Droqville's name, with which she was familiar, had occurred in this odious register, she had at least a fair chance of seeing it, and if she had seen it, she would be pretty sure to have mentioned it. Secretly, however, I was in miserable fear. Mr. Carmel had not returned since my recovery had ceased to be doubtful, and he was in possession of the weapon that had fallen from my hand.

In his retention of this damning piece of evidence, and his withdrawing himself so carefully from my presence, coupled with my knowledge of the principles that bound him to treat all private considerations, feelings, and friendships as non-existent, when they stood ever so little in the way of his all-pervading and supreme duty to his order—there was a sinister augury.

I lived in secret terror; no wonder I was not recovering quickly.

One day, when we had sat a long time silent, I asked Rebecca how I was dressed the night I had gone to Lord Chellwood's. I was immensely relieved when she told me, among other things, that I had worn a thick black veil. This was all I wanted to be assured of; for I could not implicitly rely upon my recollection through the haze and mirage of fever. It was some comfort to think that neither Monsieur Droqville nor Mr. Marston could have recognised my features.

In this state of suspense I continued for two or three weeks. At the end of that time a little adventure happened.

I was sitting in an arm-chair, in our drawing-room, with pillows about me, one afternoon, and had fallen into a doze. Mamma was in the room, and, when I had last seen her, was reading her Bible, which she now did sometimes for hours together: sometimes with tears, always with the trembling interest of one who has lost everything else.

I had fallen asleep. I was waked by tones that terrified me. I thought that I was still dreaming, or that I had lost my reason.

I heard the nasal and energetic tones of Monsieur Droqville, talking with his accustomed rapidity in the room: not to mamma, for, as I afterwards found, she had

left the room while I was asleep, but to Rebecca.

Happily for me, a screen stood between me and the door, and I suppose he did not know that I was in the room. At every movement of his foot on the floor, at every harsh emphasis in his talk, my heart bounded. I was afraid to move, almost to breathe, lest I should draw his attention to me.

My illness had quite unnerved me. I was afraid that, restless and inquisitive as I knew him to be, he would peep round the screen, and see and talk to me. I did not know the object of his visit; but in terror I surmised it, and I lay among my pillows, motionless, and with my eyes closed, while I heard him examine Rebecca, sharply, as to the date of my illness, and the nature of it.

"When was Miss Ware last out, before her illness?" he asked, at length.

"I could not tell you that exactly, sir," answered Rebecca, evasively. "She left the house but seldom, just before she was took ill; for her mamma being very bad, she was but little out of doors then."

He made a pretence of learning the facts of my case simply as a physician, and he offered in that capacity to see me at the moment.

He asked the question, in an off-hand way: "I can see her, I dare say? I'm a doctor, you know. Where is Miss Ware?"

The moment of silence that intervened before her answer seemed to me to last five minutes. She answered, however, quite firmly:

"No, sir; I thank you. She's attended by a doctor, quite reg'lar, and she's asleep now."

Rebecca had heard me speak with horror of Monsieur Droqville, and did not forget my antipathy.

He hesitated. I heard his fingers drumming, as he mused, upon the other side of the screen.

"Well," he said, dwelling on the word meditatively, "it doesn't matter much. I don't mind; only it might have been as well. However, you can tell Mrs. Ware a note to my old quarters will find me, and I shall be very happy."

And so saying, I heard him walk, at first slowly, from the room, and then run briskly down the stairs. Then the old hall-door shut smartly after him.

The fear that this man inspired, and not without reason, in my mind, was indescribable. I can't be mistaken in my recollec-

tion upon that point, for, as soon as he was gone, I fainted.

When I recovered, my fears returned. No one who has not experienced that solitary horror, knows what it is to keep an undivulged secret, full of danger, every hour inspiring some new terror, with no one to consult, and no courage but your own to draw upon.

Even mamma's dejected spirits took fire at what she termed the audacity of Monsieur Droqville's visit. My anger, greater than hers, was silenced by fear.

Mamma was roused; she ran volubly—though interrupted by many sobs and gushes of tears—over the catalogue of her wrongs and miseries, all of which she laid to Monsieur Droqville's charge.

The storm blew over, however, in an hour or so. But later in the evening mamma was suffering under a return of her illness, brought on by her agitation. It was not violent; still there was suffering; and, to me, gloomier proof that her malady was established, and the grave in a nearer perspective. This turned my alarms into a new channel.

She was very patient and gentle. As I sat by her bedside, looking at her sad face, what unutterable tenderness, what sorrow trembled at my heart! At about six o'clock she had fallen asleep, and with this quietude my thoughts began to wander, and other fears returned.

It was for no good, I was sure, that Monsieur Droqville had tracked us to our dismal abode. Whatever he might do in this affair of my crime, or mania, passion would not guide it, nor merely social considerations; it would be directed by a policy the principles of which I could not anticipate. I had no clue to guide me; I was in utter darkness, and surrounded by all the fancies that imagination conjures from the abyss.

I was not destined to wait very long in uncertainty.

CHAPTER XLV. CONFIDENTIAL.

THE sun was setting when, on tip-toe, scarcely letting my dress rustle, so afraid I was of disturbing mamma's sleep, I stole from her room, intending to give some directions to Rebecca Torkill. As I went down the dusky stairs I passed our Malory maid, who said something, pointing to the drawing-room. I saw her lips move, but, as will happen when one is preoccupied, I took in nothing of what she said, but, with a mechanical acquiescence, followed the

direction of her hand, and entered the sitting-room.

Our house stood upon high ground, and the nearest houses between our front windows and the west were low, so that the last beams of sunset, red with smoke and mist, passed over their roofs, and shone dimly on the oak panels opposite. The windows were narrow, and the room rather dark. I saw some one standing at the window-frames in the shade. I was startled, and hesitated, close to the door. The figure turned quickly, the sun glancing on his features. It was Mr. Carmel.

He came towards me quickly; and he said, as I fancied, very coldly :

"Can you spare me two or three minutes alone, Miss Ware? I have but little to say," he added, as I did not answer. "But it is important, and I will make my words as few as possible."

We were standing close to the door.

I assented. He closed it gently, and we walked slowly, side by side, to the window, where he had been standing.

He turned. The faint sun, like a distant fire, lighted his face. What singular dark eyes he had, so large, so enthusiastic! and had ever human eye such a character of suffering? I knew very well what he was going to speak of. The face, sad, sombre, ascetic, with which I was so familiar, I now, for the first time, understood.

The shadow of the confessional was on it. It was the face of one before whom human nature, in moments of terrible sincerity, had laid bare its direful secrets, and submitted itself to a melancholy anatomisation. To some minds, sympathetic, proud, sensitive, the office of the confession must be full of self-abasement, pain, and horror. We who know our own secrets, and no one else's, know nothing of the astonishment, and melancholy, and disgust that must strike some minds on contemplating the revelations of others, and discovering, for certain, that the standard of human nature is not above such and such a level.

"I have brought you this," he said, scarcely above his breath, holding the knife so that it lay across the hollow of his hand. His haggard eyes were fixed on me, and he said: "I know the whole story of it. Unless you forbid me, I will drop it into the river to-night; it is the evidence of an act for which you are, I thank God, no more accountable than a somnambulist for what she does in her dream. Over Monsieur Droqville I have neither autho-

rity nor influence. On the contrary, he can command me. But of this much I am sure; so long as your friends do not attack Lady Lorrimer's will—and I believe they have no idea of taking any such steps—you need fear no trouble whatever from him."

I made him no reply, but I think he saw something in my face that made him add, with more emphasis :

"You may be sure of that."

I was immensely and instantly relieved, for I knew that there was not the slightest intention of hazarding any litigation on the subject of the will.

"But," he resumed, in the same cold tones, and with the same anxiety in his dark eyes, "there is a person from whom you may possibly experience annoyance. There are circumstances of which, as yet, you know nothing, that may, not unnaturally, bring you once more into contact with Mr. Marston. If that should happen, you must be on your guard. I understand that he said something that implies his suspicions. It may have been no more than conjecture. It may be that it was impossible he could have recognised you with certainty. If, I repeat, an untoward destiny should bring you together under the same roof, be wise stand aloof from him, admit nothing; defeat his suspicions and his cunning by impenetrable caution. He has an interest in seeking to disgrace you, and where he has an object to gain he has neither conscience nor mercy. I wish I could inspire you with the horror of that mean and formidable character which so many have acquired by a bitter experience. I can but repeat my warning, and implore of you to act upon it, if the time should come. This thing I retain for the present"—he glanced at the weapon in his hand—"and dispose of it to-night, as I said."

There was no emotion in his manner; no sign of any special interest in me; but his voice and looks were unspeakably earnest, and inspired me with a certain awe.

I had not forgiven Mr. Carmel yet, or rather my pride would not retract; and my parting with him at our former house was fresh in my recollection.

So it was, I might suppose, in his; for his manner was cold, and even severe.

"Our old acquaintance ended, Miss Ware, by your command, and, on reflection, with my own willing submission. When last we parted, I thought it unlikely that we should ever meet again, and this interview is not voluntary—necessity compelled it. I have simply done my

duty, and, I earnestly hope, not in vain. It must be something very unlooked for, indeed, that shall ever constrain me to trouble you again."

He showed no sign of wishing to bid me a kindlier farewell. The actual, as well as metaphorical, distance between us had widened; he was by this time at the door; he opened it, and took his leave, very coldly.

It was very unlike his former parting.

I had only said:

"I am very grateful, Mr. Carmel, for your care of me—miserable me."

He made no answer; he simply repeated his farewell, as gently and coldly as before, and left the room, and I saw him walk away from our door in the fast-fading light. Heavier and heavier was my heart, as I saw him move quickly away. I had yearned, during our cold interview, to put out my hand to him, and ask him, in simple phrase, to make it up with me. I burned to tell him that I had judged him too hardly, and was sorry; but my pride forbade it. His pride, too, I thought, had held him aloof, and so I had lost my friend.

My eyes filled with tears, that rolled heavily over my cheeks.

I sat at one of our windows, looking, over the distant roofs, toward the discoloured and disappearing tints of evening and the melancholy sky, which even through the smoke of London has its poetry and tenderness, until the light faded, and the moon began to shine through the twilight.

Then I went up-stairs, and found mamma still sleeping.

As I stood by the bed looking at her, Rebecca Torkill at my side whispered:

"She's lookin' very pale, poor thing, don't you think, miss? Too pale, a deal."

I did think so; but she was sleeping tranquilly. Every change in her looks was now a subject of anxiety, but her hour had not quite come yet. She looked so very pale that I began to fear that she had fainted; but she awoke just then, and said she would sit up for a little time. Her colour did not return; she seemed faint, but thought she would be more herself by-and-bye.

She came down to the drawing-room, and soon did seem better, and chatted more than she had done, I think, since our awful misfortune had befallen us, and appeared more like her former self; I mean, that simpler and tender self, that I had seen

far away from artificial London, among the beautiful solitudes of her birthplace.

While we were talking here, Rebecca Torkill, coming in now and then, and lending a word, after the manner of privileged old rustic servants, to keep the conversation going, the business of this story was being transacted in other places.

Something of Mr. Carmel's adventures that night I afterwards learned. He had two or three calls to make before he went to his temporary home. A friend had lent him, during his absence abroad, his rooms in the Temple.

Arrived there, he let himself in by a latch-key. It was night, the shutters unclosed, the moon shining outside, and its misty beams, slanting in at the dusty windows, touched objects here and there in the dark room with a cold distinctness.

To a man already dejected, what is more dispiriting than a return to empty and unlighted rooms? Mr. Carmel moved like a shadow through this solitude, and in his melancholy listlessness, stood for a time at the window.

Here and there a light, from a window in the black line of buildings opposite, showed that human thought and eyes were busy; but if these points of light and life made the prospect less dismal, they added by contrast to the gloom that pervaded his own chambers.

As he stood, some dimly-seen movement caught his eye, and, looking over his shoulder, he saw the door through which he had himself come in slowly open, and a man put in his head, and then enter silently, and shut the door. This figure, faintly seen in the imperfect light, resembled but one man of all his acquaintance, and he the last man in the world, as he thought, who would have courted a meeting. Carmel stood for a moment startled and chilled by his presence.

"I say, Carmel, don't you know me?" said a very peculiar voice. "I saw you come in, and intended to knock; but you left your door open."

By this time he had reached the window, and stood beside Mr. Carmel with the moonlight revealing his features sharply enough. That pale light fell upon the remarkable face of Mr. Marston.

"I'm not a ghost, though I've been pretty near it two or three times. I see what you're thinking—death may have taken better men? I might have been very well spared? and having escaped it,

I should have laid the lesson to heart? Well, so I have. I was very nearly killed at the great battle of Fuentes. I fought for the Queen of Spain, and be hanged to her! She owes me fifteen pounds ten and elevenpence, British currency, to this day. It only shows my luck. In that general action there were only four living beings hit so as to draw blood: myself, a venerable orange-woman, a priest's mule, and our surgeon-in-chief, whose thumb and razor were broken by a spent ball, as he was shaving a grenadier, under an umbrella, while the battle was raging. You see the Spaniard is a discreet warrior, and we very seldom got near enough to hurt each other. I was hit by some blundering beast. He must have shut his eyes, like Gil Blas, for there was not a man in either army who could ever hit anything he aimed at. No matter, he very nearly killed me; half an inch higher, and I must have made up my mind to see you, dear Carmel, no more, and to shut my eyes on this sweet, jesuitical world. It was the first ugly wound of the campaign, and the enemy lived for a long time on the reputation of it. But the truth is, I have suffered a great deal in sickness, wounds, and fifty other ways. I have been as miserable a devil as any righteous man could wish me to be; and I am changed; upon my honour, I'm as different a man from what I was, as you are from me. But I can't half see you; do light your candles, I entreat."

"Not while you are here," said Carmel.

"Why, what are you afraid of?" said Marston. "You haven't, I hope, got a little French milliner behind your screen, like Joseph Surface, who, I think, would have made a very pretty Jesuit. Why should you object to light?"

"Your ribaldry is out of place here," said Carmel, who knew very well that Marston had not come to talk nonsense, and recount his adventures in Spain; and that his business, whatever it might be, was likely to be odious. "What right have you to enter my room? What right to speak to me anywhere?"

"Come, Carmel, don't be unreasonable; you know very well I can be of use to you."

"You can be of none," answered Carmel, a little startled; "and if you could, I would not have you. Leave my room, sir."

"You can exorcise some evil spirits, but not me, till I've said my say," answered Marston, with a smile that looked grim and cynical in the moonlight. "I say I can be of use to you."

"It's enough; I won't have it; go," said Carmel, with a sterner emphasis.

Marston smiled again, and looked at him.

"Well, I can be of use," he said, "and I don't want particularly to be of use to you; but you can do me a kindness, and it is better to do it quietly, than upon compulsion. Will you be of use to me? I'll show you how."

"God forbid!" said Carmel, quickly. "It is nothing good, I'm sure."

Marston looked at him with an evil eye; it was a sneer of intense anger.

After some seconds he said, his eyes still fixed askance on Mr. Carmel:

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive, et cætera, eh? I suppose you sometimes pray your paternoster? A pretty time you have kept up that old grudge against me—haven't you—about Geneva?"

He kept his eyes on Carmel, as if he enjoyed the spectacle of the torture he applied, and liked to see the wince and quiver that accompanied its first thrill.

At the word, Edwyn Carmel's eyes started up from the floor to which they had been lowered, with a flash to the face of his visitor. His forehead flushed; he remained speechless for some seconds.

Marston did not smile; his features were fixed, but there was a secret, cruel smile in his eyes, as he watched these evidences of agitation.

"Well, I should not have said the name; I should not have alluded to it; I did wrong," he said, after some seconds; "but I was going, before you riled me, to say, how really I blame myself, now, for all that deplorable business. I do, upon my soul! What more can a fellow say, when reparation is impossible, than that he is sorry? Is not repentance all that a man like me can offer? I saw you were thinking of it; you vexed me; I was angry, and I could not help saying what I did. Now do let that miserable subject drop; and hear me, on quite another, without excitement. It is not asking a great deal."

Carmel placed his hand to his head, as if he had not heard what he said, and then groaned.

"Why don't you leave me?" he said, piteously, turning again toward Marston; "don't you see that nothing but pain and reproach can result from your staying here?"

"Let me first say a word," said Marston; "you can assist me in a very harmless and

perfectly unobjectionable matter. Every fellow who wants to turn over a new leaf marries. The lady is poor—there is that proof, at least, that it is not sordid; you know her, you can influence her——”

“Perhaps I do know her; perhaps I know who she is—I may as well say, at once, I do. I have no influence; and if I had, I would not use it for you. I think I know your reasons, also; I think I can see them.”

“Well, suppose there are reasons, it's not the worse for that,” said Marston, growing again angry. “I thought I would just come and try whether you chose to be on friendly terms. I'm willing; but if you won't, I can't help you. I'll make use of you all the same. You had better think again. I'm pleasanter as a friend than an enemy.”

“I don't fear you as an enemy, and I do fear you as a friend. I will aid you in nothing; I have long made up my mind,” answered Carmel, savagely.

“I think, through Monsieur Droqville, I'll manage that. Oh, yes, you will give me a lift.”

“Why should Monsieur Droqville control my conduct?” asked Mr. Carmel, sharply.

“It was he who made you a Catholic; and I suspect he has a fast hold on your conscience and obedience. If he chooses to promote the matter, I rather think you must.”

“You may think as you please,” said Carmel.

“That's a great deal from your Church,” sneered Marston; and, changing his tone again, he said: “Look here, Carmel, once more; where's the good in our quarrelling? I won't press that other point, if you don't like; but you must do this, the most trifling thing in the world; you must tell me where Mrs. Ware lives. No one knows since old Ware made a fool of himself, poor devil! But I think you'll allow that, with my feelings, I may, at least, speak to the young lady's mother? Do tell me where they are? You know, of course?”

“If I did know, I should not tell you; so it does not matter,” answered Carmel.

Marston looked very angry, and a little silence followed.

“I suppose you have now said everything,” resumed Carmel; “and again I desire that you will leave me.”

“I mean to do so,” said Marston, putting on his hat with a kind of emphasis, “though it's hard to leave such romantic, light, and

brilliant company. You might have had peace and you prefer war. I think there are things you have at heart that I could forward, if all went right with me.” He paused, but Carmel made no sign. “Well, you take your own way now, not mine; and, by-and-bye, I think you'll have reason to regret it.”

Marston left the room, with no other farewell. The clap with which he shut the door, as he went, had hardly ceased to ring round the walls, when Carmel saw him emerge in the court below, and walk away, with a careless air, humming a tune in the moonlight.

Why is it that there are men upon earth whose secret thoughts are always such as to justify fear; and nearly all whose plans, if not through malice, from some other secret obliquity, involve evil to others? We have most of us known something of some such man; a man whom we are disposed to watch in silence; who, smile as he may, brings with him a sense of insecurity, and whose departure is a real relief. Such a man seems to me a stranger on earth; his confidences to be with unseen companions; his mental enjoyments not human; and his mission here cruel and mysterious. I look back with wonder and with thankfulness. Fearful is the strait of any one who in the presence of such an influence, under such a fascination, loses the sense of danger!

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY IN MODERN TIMES.
(CONCLUSION OF THE SERIES.)

ONE interesting story of the robbery of the Treasury at Westminster in Edward the First's time must not be forgotten before we pass on to the Reformation, and the general pillage of the abbey that then ensued. In March of the year 1303, the warlike king set forth with his army to put down what he was pleased to call a rebellion in Scotland. Early in May the Treasury in the abbey was broken open, and royal plate and jewels to the value of about two millions of money stolen. The robbers were soon traced; the chief culprit proved to be Richard de Podelicote, a travelling merchant for wool, cheese, and butter. Richard had been sued at Bruges for a small debt, and had planned the robbery to retrieve his losses. Two monks, two foresters, and eight other persons, had aided him in the gigantic burglary, and

had spent more than four months cutting a way to the treasure. A witness was found who had seen the thieves take boat at the King's Bridge, carrying with them two heavy black leather panniers. They returned late in the day, and landed at the abbey mill. Part of the spoil had been sent to a linendraper of St. Giles's, who, alarmed at the royal proclamations, despatched a shepherd's boy with a pannier full of broken gold and silver plate to hide at Kentish Town, where it was found. Another part of the treasure was boated across the river, and never traced. But the bulk of the spoil the monks had buried in the cemetery (the graveyard enclosed by the cloisters), and had then sown the ground with hemp, so that (it being spring time) the tall green plants should soon conceal the booty. As it was, the thieves had only made two visits to this magic cave, and left behind four royal crowns and great stores of jewels, rings, and plate. The Abbot of Westminster, forty-eight brethren of the house, and thirty-two other persons, were sent to the Tower till this robbery could be cleared up. The records do not mention the fate of Richard de Podelicote and his abettors; but we may be pretty sure that the hemp sown by the daring thieves was twisted in due time into tight and serviceable ropes.

And now we push forward to the great spoliation of Henry the Eighth, whose nice theological scruples led him to many a remunerative robbery of papal treasures. In his Catholic youth this great bashaw had planned a tomb in the abbey for himself and his unlucky Spanish wife, one-fourth grander than that of his father.

Henry the Eighth himself took a dislike to Westminster, where his father, mother, and sister slept, and he was buried at Windsor, by the side of the wife whom he loved so much that he did even behead her—Jane Seymour. !

In Edward's reign the abbey was a mere place to pillage. The chapter-house was turned into a record-office, and the Protector Somerset had once resolved to pull down the abbey and with its remains build his Strand palace, which was constructed from the ruins of nine churches. Mary changed all these things. She restored the whole Catholic splendour, and buried that lad of promise, her brother, at the head of his grandfather's tomb. When the bigoted queen herself died heart-broken at her husband's desertion and our disasters in France, she was buried in the north aisle

of the great chapel, and her funeral, as Dean Stanley observes, was the last solemnity of the Roman Catholic Church celebrated in the abbey. In due time to her cruel sister's side came Queen Elizabeth, and the whole city wept as she passed to her stately grave.

Then the Scottish race mounted the throne that the Tudors had dignified, and James the First brought from Peterborough the body of his mother Mary. She was interred in the north aisle of the abbey, close to Elizabeth, but beneath a grander tomb; and the Scottish Catholics believed that miracles were wrought by her bones. Already the poets had forced their way into the abbey, and taken their place beside the good and evil princes. A great poet long before had led the way. In 1400, Chaucer, probably because he had been for a short time clerk of the royal works at Windsor and Westminster, was interred in the abbey. In the reign of Edward the Sixth a small poet of the day erected the present monument to Chaucer, probably moving at the same time the poet's bones to the same place. In Elizabeth's time, that great pupil of Chaucer—Spenser—came to the abbey to lie beside his mighty master:

Near him in genius, near him in his tomb.

The gentle poet, ruined by the Irish insurrection, in which he had lost a child, came to England to die poor and broken-hearted in King-street, Westminster. The Earl of Essex gave him a public funeral, and the poets of the day, Beaumont and Fletcher, Ben Jonson, and, no doubt, Shakespeare, attended the burial, and wrote elegies, which, with the sacred pens that wrote them, were cast upon the coffin. To the same south transept (the Poet's Corner) of St. Benedict's chapel, the year before Shakespeare died, Beaumont was also borne when his heroic song had ceased. That Shakespeare was to be buried among the poets, his friends and subjects, seems to have been the first expectation of his admirers when he died suddenly at Stratford; for a versifier, named Basse, in an elegy on the greatest of our poets, wrote quaintly, yet with fine feeling:

Renowned Spenser, lie a thought more nigh
To learned Chaucer, and rare Beaumont lie
A little nearer Spenser, and make room
For Shakespeare in your threefold, fourfold tomb.

In Charles's reign, Drayton, the topographical poet, of whom Goldsmith, when he visited the abbey, had never even heard before, was buried in the Poet's Corner;

some Cavalier, Puritan, or Westminster school-boy, has broken half the nose off his bust, which gives it a very rueful appearance. Ben Jonson, who is said to have written Drayton's epitaph, died a few years later. The tradition is that Ben asked Charles the First for eighteen square inches of ground in the abbey, and that he was buried in the north aisle of the nave, standing upright to be ready for the resurrection. The probability is that tradition, in this case, speaks truth; for, in 1849, a clerk of the works, opening a new grave, saw the two leg bones of Jonson upright in the sand, and the skull, with traces of red hair still upon it, rolled down among the sand. The stone inscribed, "O rare Ben Jonson!" was fitted into the north wall of the nave in 1821. There is a medallion also to this trusty friend and fellow-player of Shakespeare in the Poet's Corner. During the Civil Wars, May, the poet and historian of the Commonwealth, was buried with honour in the abbey; but after the Restoration poor May was turned out of his lodging, and Sir William Davenant, Shakespeare's godson and Milton's generous friend, buried there in his stead. But May would not have cared if he had known that the great Protector himself was also to be expelled from among the kings. Cromwell had buried in the abbey his noble old mother, his sister Jane, General Disbrow's wife, and his favourite daughter (mixed up in a dozen absurd, careless stories), Elizabeth Claypole. The great Oliver, buried by "Tumble-down Dick," at an expense of sixty thousand pounds, was brought from Somerset House, where he lay in state, to the east end of Henry the Seventh's chapel, beneath the great east window. The body, after the Restoration, to the shame of the Royalists, was dug up, hanged, beheaded, and buried under the gallows at Tyburn. The plate found on the breast of the corpse is now, says Dean Stanley, in the possession of Earl de Grey. Elizabeth Claypole, of all the Cromwells, was left alone in her long sleep. Her name was inscribed on the stone in 1867.

After the Restoration, Charles the First was to have been brought from Windsor to Henry the Seventh's chapel, and reinterred under a splendid tomb of Wren's design; but his merry son no doubt squandered the money voted for the purpose, and pretended to find it difficult to discover the martyr's body at Windsor. The very year of the Restoration,

Charles's brother, the Duke of Gloucester, was buried in Henry the Seventh's chapel, and the same year there came to the same dark home Mary of Orange, and the next year the Queen of Bohemia, Prince Rupert's mother. Last of all came the worthless, witty, good-for-nothing king himself, who was buried obscurely at night at the east end of the north aisle, James being afraid to venture on a grand Catholic funeral.

But we must turn back to the monuments of the great nobles, generals, and statesmen who, from the heroic reign of Elizabeth, began to jostle the monarchs, and claim almost equal sepulchral rank with persons whom, in wisdom and in great deeds, they had so far surpassed. In Elizabeth's reign, John Baron Russell, second son of the second earl, has a monument, on which his learned widow has commemorated his virtues in Greek, Latin, and English. His daughter Elizabeth, also buried in the abbey, was a god-child of the queen, and a maid of honour. The figure on her monument has a finger pointing to a skull, which led to a verger's legend that she died from the prick of a needle, as a judgment for working on a Sunday. Worthy Sir Roger de Coverley was much interested in the fate of this "martyr to good housewifery."

The abbey also contains among its Elizabethan courtiers Sir Thomas Bromley, the Lord Chancellor who presided at the trial of Mary Queen of Scots, and Lord Hunsdon, Elizabeth's cousin. The great Lord Burleigh erected here (in the chapel of St. Nicholas) a stately monument to his second wife and daughter, and others of the Cecils are quartered in various parts of the abbey. But the finest monument of this period is that of Sir Francis Vere, a brave commander in the Netherlands, who lies supported by four armed knights—a design imitated from the tomb of a Count of Nassau at Breda. Roubillac, we are told, once stood watching the fourth knight for a long time, saying, "Hush! hush! he vill speak presently." Those favourites of the queen, the Knollyses and the Norrises, have also both representatives in the abbey. Half the latter family died in battle.

The less worthy Court of James the First has fewer representatives, but the monuments of that period, nevertheless, include those of James's cousin, the Duke of Richmond, and in the vaults beneath lies his beautiful duchess of Charles the

Second's time, whose effigy in wax was clothed in the robes she wore at the coronation of Queen Anne, whilst near it lay a parrot which had lived with the duchess forty years.

The reign of Charles brought more turbulent spirits. First, that dangerous favourite, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, among them. When struck by Felton's knife, the proud duke, who, as Clarendon says, rather flew than rose to power, was buried by Charles among the kings in Henry the Seventh's chapel (north side, central aisle). In the chapel of St. Nicholas repose his father and his father's second wife. In St. Benedict's chapel is buried the Earl of Middlesex, a favourite of the favourite Buckingham, and by him ruined and disgraced.

Many Commonwealth heroes had temporary lodgings in the abbey. Pym was brought here in state by the two Houses and the Assembly of Divines. Then came the Earl of Essex, Cromwell's stolid rival; but while the effigy laid in state some rough Cavaliers stole in at night into the abbey, broke its head, slashed the buff coat, breeches, and boots, and took away the sword. Popham, admiral and general, followed; then Dorislaus the advocate at the queen's trial, who was assassinated by revengeful Cavaliers at the Hague; Strode, one of the celebrated "five members;" Cromwell's brave son-in-law, Ireton; the illustrious Blake; Constable, a regicide; and Bradshaw, the stern president at Charles's trial—all these were dug up at the Restoration, and buried in a pit at the back door of one of the prebendal houses in St. Margaret's churchyard. Five Puritans alone were left in the abbey; of these, three were Elizabeth Claypole (Cromwell's favourite daughter), the Earl of Essex, and Grace Scot, the wife of a beheaded regicide, and yet Cromwell had generously allowed the state funeral of Archbishop Usher in the abbey, and even paid for it out of his own pocket.

In Charles the Second's time the abbey received the bodies of some brave warriors by sea and land: Monk, Pepys's hero, the Earl of Sandwich, and the Duke of Ormond. Yet careless Charles forgot to erect any memorial for his defenders. Monk's effigy and armour, however, long remained one of the sights of the abbey, and his ducal cap, according to the Ingoldsby Legends, was used till quite our own day by the abbey showmen to collect fees. The great Clarendon came from his exile

to the same royal receptacle of good and evil. Many brave victims, too, of the tough Dutch war were brought to the abbey, and besides this little knot of heroes that poor harmless prodigal, "Tom of Ten Thousand," who was shot in his coach, in Pall Mall, by the servants of his rival, the Count Konigsmark. To these celebrities, small and great, we must add Sir Edmund-bury Godfrey, the Protestant justice in the Strand, who was supposed by the fanatics of the time to have been murdered by the queen's Popish servants. Besides these we may mention Tom Chaffinch, a minister of Charles's pleasure, who died of the plague; the chivalrous Duke of Newcastle, and his fantastic one-stocking wife.

William of Orange was buried in the same vault as Charles the Second; he was interred probably at dead of night, and his grave is unmarked. William died in April, 1702; and in September, 1701, James, his gloomy rival, had been interred in the chapel of the English Benedictines at Paris. The funeral of Mary, the bad daughter but good wife, was attended by the Houses of Parliament, the first time Lords and Commons had ever attended the funeral of a sovereign. The Tower cannon, we are told, boomed all through the ceremony. A robin was seen perching for days upon the queen's hearse in the abbey, and was regarded by the visitors with almost superstitious affection. Many of the celebrities of the new dynasty rest near her; among them Bentinck, the first Duke of Portland, and that wise minister, George Saville, Marquis of Halifax.

That fat and somewhat insipid leader of a glorious reign, Queen Anne, is usually regarded as childless, but seven of her children (all of whom died in their infancy) lie in the abbey vaults. She herself and her husband, George of Denmark, sleep in a vault that was then bricked up for ever, much to the indignation of old Samuel Wesley and other ardent Jacobites. After Dryden, who, as Dean Stanley tells us, was laid almost in the very grave of Chaucer, came a small fry of poets, among them John Phillips (The Splendid Shilling), a mere versifier, whose epitaph proclaims him second only to Milton. Sir Cloudsley Shovel (whose monument Addison thought so absurd) died in Anne's reign, and the abbey also boasts many of the heroes of Marlborough's battles.

In the reign of George the First, Atterbury buried Rowe in the abbey, and Pope wrote his epitaph. Then came to Eug-

land's Pantheon a greater than any since Dryden, the gentle-natured Addison. His honoured body lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, and Atterbury read the funeral service with solemn energy. For three generations "the unsullied statesman, the consummate painter of life and manners, the satirist who never wounded," remained without even a simple tablet. In the same reign Prior, that gayest of singers, was buried in the south transept; the bust was a present from Louis the Fourteenth, who had known the careless epicurean singer when he was our ambassador to Paris. In this reign, too, was buried, with almost royal pomp, the great Duke of Marlborough, at whose funeral Pope and Atterbury were present. The body of the great general was afterwards removed to Blenheim; and, last of all, we may mention the poet-Duke of Buckingham, who had in his youth been the accepted lover of Anne, and who married a natural daughter of James the First.

In George the Second's reign two private London citizens erected monuments to Milton and Butler, and Pope ridiculed the vanity of the two ostentatious men. Then, in 1729, died Congreve, who received a sumptuous funeral. Good-natured, careless Gay was the next to join the sacred brotherhood. He was interred, says worthy Arbuthnot, as if he had been a peer of the realm; and the Duke of Queensberry, his kind patron, Pope, and Chesterfield, were present at his funeral. By his own request was cut the pagan epitaph:

Life is a jest, and all things show it,
I thought it once and now I know it.

The monument of John Duke of Argyll and Greenwich, with its pompous statues of History and Eloquence (the latter much admired by Canova), deserves a word not from Pope's praise of the man,

The state's whole thunder born to wield,
And shake alike the senate and the field,

or Thomson's praise, but as that of the kindly statesman who granted Jeanie Deans the pardon of her sister. To this reign, too, belongs the statue erected to his mother by Horace Walpole. It was copied from the statue of Modesty at Rome.

The last king taken to the abbey was George the Second. He directed that he should be buried in "a large stone sarcophagus with his beloved wife Caroline, and the two side planks of the coffin to be removed, so that their dust might mingle." Horace Walpole was present at his funeral, and watched "the chiaro-oscuro with a cynical dillettante eye." He describes the

Duke of Cumberland paralysed and half dead, and the absurd Duke of Newcastle, full of curiosity, crying hysterically, and being recovered by the archbishop's zealous smelling-bottle. In the abbey lie many others of the House of Hanover. Frederick Prince of Wales, father of George the Third, and his wife Augusta, his two sisters, Caroline and Amelia, the Duke of York, and the graceless Duke of Cumberland. The two youngest children of George the Third, Alfred and Octavius, were at first buried near George the Second, but afterwards removed to Windsor.

In 1764, the veteran statesman Pulteney was buried by night in St. John's chapel. A mob broke in, and gentlemen standing on the tomb of Edward the First, broke down the wooden canopy, and with portions of it and with their swords defended the steps leading to the Confessor's chapel. To the generals of the '45 rebellion, like Grant and Wade, now came a fresh crop of heroes: Admirals Saumarez, Wager, and Vernon; then those strenuous conquerors of the East, Eyre Coote and Watson; Wolfe, the hero of Quebec; then Captain Starr, in Howe's great victory, and three captains of Rodney. The great disaster of the Royal George is commemorated by a tablet to Kempenfelt, in the chapel of St. John. That unsatisfactory General Burgoyne lies without graven record in the north cloister, and in the nave rests unlucky Major André, whose head on the bas-relief the Westminster boys have often carried away. Later still we have our Indian wars represented by the graves of those brave saviours of our Indian empire, the rivals Outram and Clyde.

Nor must the later statesmen be forgotten. They lie in the north transept, in mute parliament, as the poets do in the south. Foremost, among them is the great Earl of Chatham—that true patriot "of the old rock," who was buried with regal pomp, Burke, among others, holding the pall—and in the same vault lies Pitt. Near Lord Mansfield, idolised by his friend Pope, stands the statue of Sir William Follett. Near Pitt is buried his great rival Fox:

Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,
'Twill trickle to his rival's bier.

In the same portion of the abbey rest Lord Holland, Tierney, Mackintosh, and Grattan, all illustrious names. There, after their labours, in goodly company they rest:

Malice domestic, foreign levy,
Nothing can touch them further.

Terrible lessons statesmen may gather during a thoughtful walk in these solemn cathedral aisles. Between Pitt and Fox lies the hated Castlereagh, before whose hearse the great multitude shouted with cruel joy, and opposite Pitt lies Canning, who was driven to his grave by party spite. Sir Robert Peel has a statue here, and near his first patron lies Palmerston, the survivor of many dynasties. Among the Indian statesmen are Sir John Malcolm, Sir Stamford Raffles, and Warren Hastings.

But no room is left us to more than briefly sum up the philanthropists, divines, men of letters and science, and actors, to whom the abbey has afforded sepulchre or memorial. Among the philanthropists we have Jonas Hanway, Wilberforce, and Fowell Buxton. Among the philosophers, Horner, Cornwall Lewis, and Cobden. Among the great divines, that theological giant, Isaac Barrow, South and Horneck, Atterbury and Watts. Among the men of letters are Goldsmith, Johnson (near his enemy Macpherson), Cumberland and Sheridan, who ridiculed him, Anstey and Campbell (Southey and Keble, tablets), Macaulay, Thackeray, and now also, alas! Dickens and Bulwer. Among the actors are Mrs. Oldfield, whose vanity Pope satirised, Mrs. Bracegirdle, Mrs. Cibber, the great Betterton, Booth, Spranger Barry, Foote, Garrick, Mrs. Siddons, and Kemble. Among musicians, Lawes (Milton's friend), Purcell, Blow, Croft, and Handel. The architects so royally honoured are Wyatt, Chambers, and Barry. The men of science are Newton, Watt (with an inscription by Brougham), Telford, Robert Stephenson, Locke, and Brunel.

The quaintest account of the state of the abbey and all its abuses in the last century is contained in Smith's Life of Nollekens, the sculptor. The following conversation of the shrewd old miser with one of the vergers is thus given verbatim by his disappointed executor, Mr. Smith:

Mr. Nollekens, during the time his men were moulding parts of monuments in Westminster Abbey, had the following conversation with the late Mr. John Catling, the verger, to the great amusement of Smith's father, who was also present.

Mr. Nollekens: Why, Mr. Catling, you seem to be as fond of the abbey as I am of my models by Michael Angelo. My man Finny tells me you were born in it?

Mr. Catling: No, not in the abbey; I was born in the tower, on the right hand, just before you enter into the little cloisters.

Nollekens: Oh! I know; there's some steps to go up, and a wooden rail to hold by. Now, I wonder you don't lose that silver thing you carry before the dean when you are going through the cloisters. Pray, why do you suffer the schoolboys to chalk the stones all over? I have been spelling pudding, grease, lard, butter, kitchen-stuff, and I don't know what all.

Catling: Why, thereby hangs a tale. Do you know that the dean married a woman?

Nollekens: Well, so he ought; the clergy are allowed to marry now-a-days. It is not as it was formerly. You know I have been in Rome, and know enough about their customs.

Here Mr. Catling gave Mr. Nollekens an admonitory pinch upon the elbow, for at that moment the bishop was passing through Poet's Corner from the deanery, on his way to the House of Lords.

Nollekens: What does he carry that blue bag with him for?

Catling: It contains his papers upon the business of the day.

Nollekens: Oh! Now you talk of papers, Mrs. Nollekens bid me to ask you where Ashburnham House is, that held the Cotton paper, I think it was?

Catling: Your good lady means the Cottonian Manuscripts. Sir, it is in Little Dean's Yard, on the north side; it has a stone entrance, designed by Inigo Jones, and is now inhabited by Doctor Bell, who was chaplain to the Princess Amelia.

Nollekens: Oh! I know; he was robbed by Sixteen-string Jack in Gunnersbury-lane; thank ye. And she wants to know what you've done with the wooden figures, with wax masks, and all in silk tatters, that the Westminster boys called the Ragged Regiment. She says they were always carried before the corpse formerly.

Catling: Why, we had them all out the other day for John Carter and young Smith to draw from; they are put up in those very narrow closets, between our wax figures of Queen Elizabeth and Lord Chatham in his robes, in Bishop Islip's chapel.

Nollekens: What, where the poll-parrot is? I wonder you keep such stuff. Why, at Antwerp, where my father was born, they put such things in silks outside in the streets. I don't mind going to Mrs. Salmon's wax-work in Fleet-street, where Mother Shipton gives you a kick as you are going out. Oh, dear, you should not have such rubbish in the abbey; and then for you to take money for this foolish thing

an obsolete one. I was told they were for epileptic patients. In virtue of his official position as bandmaster, Herr Küster had a key; and, after walking serenely into a passage precisely like the rest, informed me, with the utmost coolness, that I was in the refractory ward. I looked around for the stalwart attendant, who is generally to be seen on duty, and to my dismay found he was quite at the other end of an exceedingly long corridor. I do not know that I am particularly nervous; but I candidly confess to an anxiety to get near that worthy official. We were only three outsiders, and the company looked mischievous. One gentleman was walking violently up and down, turning up his coat-sleeves, as though bent on our instant demolition. Another, an old grey-bearded man, came up, and fiercely demanded if I were a freemason. I was afraid he might resent my saying I was not, when it happily occurred to me that the third in our party, an amateur contra-bassist, was of the craft. I told our old friend so. He demanded the sign, was satisfied, and, in the twinkling of an eye, our double-bass friend was struggling in his fraternal embrace. The warder, mistaking the character of the hug, hastened to the rescue, and I was at ease.

We then passed to the ball-room, where my musical friends were beginning to "tune up," and waiting for their conductor. The large room was gaily decorated, and filled with some three or four hundred patients, arranged Spurgeon-wise: the ladies on one side, and the gentlemen on the other. There was a somewhat rakish air about the gathering, due to the fact of the male portion not being in full dress, but arranged in free-and-easy costume of corduroys and felt boots. The frequent warders in their dark blue uniforms lent quite a military air to the scene; and on the ladies' side the costumes were more picturesque; some little latitude was given to feminine taste, and the result was that a large portion of the patients were gorgeous in pink gowns. One old lady, who claimed to be a scion of royalty, had a resplendent mob-cap; but the belles of the ball-room were decidedly to be found among the female attendants, who were bright, fresh-looking young women, in a neat, black uniform, with perky little caps, and bunches of keys hanging at their side like the rosary of a *sœur de charité*, or the *chatelaines* with which young ladies used to adorn themselves some seasons ago. Files of patients kept streaming into the already crowded

room, and one gentleman, reversing the order assigned to him by nature, walked gravely in on the palms of his hands, with his legs elevated in air. He had been a clown at a theatre, and still retained some of the proclivities of the boards. A wizen-faced man, who seemed to have no name beyond the conventional one of "Billy," strutted in with huge paper collars, like the corner man in a nigger troupe, and a tin decoration on his breast the size of a cheeseplate. He was insensible to the charms of Terpsichore, except in the shape of an occasional *pas seul*, and laboured under the idea that his mission was to conduct the band, which he occasionally did, to the discomfiture of Herr Küster, and the total destruction of gravity on the part of the executants, so that Billy had to be displaced. It was quite curious to notice the effect of the music on some of the quieter patients. One or two, whose countenances really seemed to justify their incarceration, absolutely hugged the foot of my music-stand, and would not allow me to hold my instrument for a moment when I was not playing on it, so anxious were they to express their admiration of me as an artist. "I used to play that instrument afore I come here," said a patient, with a squeaky voice, who for eleven years has laboured under the idea that his mother is coming to see him on the morrow; indeed, most of the little group around the platform looked upon their temporary sojourn at Hanwell as the only impediment to a bright career in the musical world.

Proceedings commenced with the Caledonians, and it was marvellous to notice the order, not to say grace and refinement with which these pauper lunatics went through their parts in the "mazy." The rosy-faced attendants formed partners for the men, and I saw a herculean warder gallantly leading along the stout old lady in the mob-cap. The larger number of the patients of course were paired with their fellow-prisoners, and at the top of the room the officials danced with some of the swells. Yes, there were swells here, ball-room coxcombs in fustian and felt. One in particular was pointed out to me as an University graduate of high family, and on my inquiring how such a man became an inmate of a pauper asylum the official said, "You see, sir, when the mind goes the income often goes too, and the people become virtually paupers." Insanity is a great leveller, true; but I could not help picturing that man's lucid intervals, and wondering whether his friends might not

do better for him. But there he is, pirouetting away with the pretty female organist, the chaplain standing by and smiling approval, and the young doctors doing the polite to a few invited guests, but not disdaining, every now and then, to take a turn with a patient. Quadrilles and Lancers follow, but no "round dances." A popular prejudice on the part of the majority sets down such dances as too exciting for the sensitive dancers. The graduate is excessively irate at this, and rates the band soundly for not playing a valse. Galops are played, but not danced; a complicated movement termed a "Circassian circle" being substituted in their place. "Three hours of square dances are really too absurd," said the graduate to an innocent second fiddle.

In the centre of the room all was gravity and decorum, but the merriest dances went on in corners. An Irish quadrille was played, and an unmistakable Paddy regaled himself with a most beautiful jig. He got on by himself for a figure or two, when, remembering, no doubt, that "happiness was born a twin," he dived into the throng, selected a white-headed old friend of some sixty years, and impressed him with the idea of a *pas de deux*. There they kept it up in a corner for the whole of the quadrille, twirling imaginary shillelaghs, and encouraging one another with that expressive Irish interjection, which it is so impossible to put down on paper. For an hour all went merry as the proverbial marriage bell, and then there was an adjournment of the male portion of the company to supper. The ladies remained in the Bazaar and discussed oranges, with an occasional dance to the pianoforte, as the band retired for refreshment too, in one of the attendants' rooms. I followed the company to their supper room, as I had come to see, not to eat. About four hundred sat down in a large apartment, and there were, besides, sundry snug supper-parties in smaller rooms. Each guest partook of an excellent repast of meat and vegetables, with a sufficiency of beer and pipes to follow. The chaplain said a short grace before supper, and a patient, who must have been a retired Methodist preacher, improved upon the brief benediction by a long rambling "asking of a blessing," to which nobody paid any attention. Then I passed up and down the long rows with a courteous official, who gave me little snatches of the history of some of the patients. Here was an actor of some note in his day; there a barrister; here again a clergyman; here a

tradesman recently "gone," "all through the strikes, sir," he added. The shadow—that most mysterious shadow of all—had chequered life's sunshine in every one of these cases. Being as they are they could not be in a better place. They have the best advice they could get even were they—as some of them claim to be—princes. If they can be cured, here is their best chance. If not—well, there were the little dead-house and the quiet cemetery lying out in the moonlight, and waiting for them when, as poor maddened Edgar Allen Poe wrote, the "fever called living," should be "over at last." But who talks of dying on this one night in all the year when even that old freemason in the refractory ward was forgetting, after his own peculiar fashion, the cruel injustice that kept him out of his twelve thousand a year and title? Universal merriment is the rule to-night. Six or seven gentlemen are on their legs at once making speeches, which are listened to about as respectfully as the "toast of the evening" at a public dinner. As many more are singing inharmoniously different songs; the fun is getting fast and furious, perhaps a little too fast and furious, when a readjournment to the ball-room is proposed, and readily acceded to, one hoary-headed old flirt remarking to me as he went by, that he was going to look for his sweetheart.

A long series of square dances followed, the graduate waxing more and more fierce at each disappointment in his anticipated valse, and Billy giving out every change in the programme like a parish clerk, which functionary he resembled in many respects. It was universally agreed that this was the best party that had ever been held in the asylum, just as the last baby is always the finest in the family. Certainly the guests all enjoyed themselves. The stalwart attendants danced more than ever with a will, the rosy attendants were rosier and nattier than before, if possible. Official reserve died out of the grandiose matron, and the young doctors hopped and skipped about as though they were medical students at Highbury Barn again. The mob-cap went whizzing about on the regal head of its owner down the middle of tremendous country dances, hands across, set to partners, and then down again as though it had never tasted the anxieties of a throne, or learnt by bitter experience the sorrows of exile. Even the academical gentleman relaxed to the fair organist, though he stuck up his hair stiffer than ever, and stamped his felt boots again as he passed the unoffending double-bass with curses

both loud and deep on the subject of square dances. At length came the inevitable God Save the Queen, which was played in one key by the orchestra, and sung in a great many different ones by the guests. It is no disrespect to Her Majesty to say that the National Anthem was received with anything but satisfaction. It was the signal that the "jinks" were over, and that was quite enough to make it unpopular. However, they sang lustily and with a good courage, all except the old woman in the mob-cap, who sat with a complacent smile as much as to say, "This is as it should be, I appreciate the honour done to my royal brothers and sisters."

This is the light side of the picture; but it had its sombre tints also. There were those in all the wards who stood aloof from the merriment, and would have none of the jinks. Lean-visaged men walked moodily up and down the passages like caged wild beasts. Their lucid interval was upon them, and they fretted at the irksome restraint and degrading companionship. It was a strange thought; but I fancied they must have longed for their mad fit as the drunkard longs for the intoxicating draught, or the opium-eater for his delicious narcotic to drown the idea of the present. There were those in the ball-room itself who, if you approached them with the proffered pinch of snuff, drove you from them with curses. One fine, intellectual man, sat by the window all the evening, writing rhapsodies of the most extraordinary character, and fancying himself a poet. Another wrapped round a thin piece of lath with paper, and superscribed it with some strange hieroglyphics, begging me to deliver it. All made arrangements for their speedy departure from Hanwell, though many in that heart-sick tone which spoke of long-deferred hope—hope never perhaps to be realised. Most painful sight of all, there was one little girl there, a child of eleven or twelve years—a child in a lunatic asylum! Think of that, parents, when you listen to the engaging nonsense of your little ones—think of the child in Hanwell wards! Remember how narrow a line separates innocence from idiotcy; so narrow a line that the words were once synonymous!

Then there was the infirmary full of occupants on that merry New Year's night. Yonder poor patient being wheeled in a chair to bed will not trouble his attendant long. There is another being lifted on his pallet-bed, and having a cup of cooling

drink applied to his parched lips by the great loving hands of a warder who tends him as gently as a woman. It seemed almost a cruel kindness to be trying to keep that poor body and soul together.

Another hour, rapidly passed in the liberal hospitality of this great institution, and silence had fallen on its congregated thousands. It is a small town in itself, and to a large extent self-dependent and self-governed. It bakes and brews, and makes its gas; and there is no need of a Licensing Bill to keep its inhabitants sober and steady. The method of doing that has been discovered in nature's own law of kindness. Instead of being chained and treated as wild beasts, the lunatics are treated as unfortunate men and women, and every effort is made to ameliorate, both physically and morally, their sad condition. Hence the bright wards, the buxom attendants, the frequent jinks. Even the chapel-service has been brightened up for their behoof.

This was what I saw by entering, as an amateur fiddler, Herr Küster's band at Hanwell Asylum; and as I ran to catch the last up-train—which I did as the saying is by the skin of my teeth—I felt that I was a wiser, though it may be a sadder man, for my evening's experiences at the Lunatic Ball.

One question would keep recurring to my mind. It has been said that if you stop your ears in a ball-room, and then look at the people—reputed sane—skipping about in the new valse or the last galop, you will imagine they must be all lunatics. I did not stop my ears that night, but I opened my eyes and saw hundreds of my fellow-creatures, all with some strange delusions, many with ferocious and vicious propensities, yet all kept in order by a few warders, a handful of girls, and all behaving as decorously as in a real ball-room. And the question which *would* haunt me all the way home was, which are the sane people, and which the lunatics?

AN AUSTRALIAN MINING TOWNSHIP.

QUARTZBOROUGH, or, as it is called in the vernacular, Grumbler's Gully, is situated about twelve miles from Bullockstown. There are various ways of approaching Grumbler's Gully. If you happen to be a commercial traveller, for instance, and temporary owner of a buggy and trot-

ting mare, you would most likely take a tour by way of Killarney, Jerusalem, Kenilworth, Blair Athole, Petersburg, Maimaitoora, Lucky Woman's, and Rowdy Flat, thus swooping upon Grumbler's Gully by way of Breakyleg, Bangatoora, and Bullockstown. If you were a squatter residing at Glengelder, The Rocks, or Crowhurst, you would ride across the Lonely Plains, down by Melancholy Swamp, and Murderer's Flat, until you reach Jack-a-dandy, where, as every one knows, the track forks to Barnestaple and St. Omer. If you were a Ballarat sharebroker, and wanted to have a look at the reefs on the road, you could turn off at Shady Cliff, and making for old Moke's, borrow a horse and ride on to the Hanging Rock, midway between Kooroot and Jefferson's Lead; this course taking you into the heart of the reefing country, you could jog easily from Salted Claim to Ballyrafferty, Dufferstown, and Moonlight Reefs, calling at the Great Eastern, and entering Grumbler's Gully from the north by way of the Good-morning-Bob Ranges, and Schwilfhaustein.

The first impression of Grumbler's Gully is, I confess, not a charming one. I think it was Mr. Caxton who replied, when asked what he thought of his new-born infant, "It is very red, ma'am." The same remark would apply to Grumbler's Gully. It is very red. Long before you get to it you are covered with dust that looks and feels like finely-powdered bricks. The haggard gum-trees by the road-side are covered with this red powder. The white near-leader seems stained with bloody sweat, and the slices of bank, that, as you approach the town, fringe the track, look as though they were lumps of red putty drying and crumbling in the sun. On turning the corner, Grumbler's Gully is below you—a long, straggling street, under a red hill that overlooks a red expanse of mud, flecked with pools of red water, and bristling with mounds, shaft-sheds, and wooden engine-houses. The sun is sinking behind yonder mighty range, under whose brow stretches that belt of scrub and marsh and crag that meets the smaller wilderness, and minor mountains rise up all around us. Grumbler's Gully is shaped like a shoe with a lump in the middle of it, or rather, perhaps, like one of those cock-boats that children make with folded paper. It is a ridge of quartz, rising in the midst of a long valley surrounded by mountains.

The place is undermined with "sink-

ings," and the inhabitants burrow like moles beneath the surface of the earth. It is no disgrace in Grumbler's Gully to wear moleskin trousers stained with the everlasting red clay. There is, indeed, a legend afloat there, to the effect that a leading townsman presided at a public dinner in those garments, and was not a whit less respectable than usual. Soon after getting into the bar of Bilberry's Golden Tribute Hotel, you discover that the well-dressed and intelligent gentleman who, in the whitest of shirt-sleeves, hands you a bottle of "Otard" (the brand then in fashion on the gully), and bids you help yourself, is a shareholder in a rich claim, and could buy and sell you over again if he liked, without inconvenience. In drinking the said "Otard" you become conscious of a thumping vibration going on somewhere, as if a giant with accelerated action of the heart were imprisoned under the flooring; and getting out into the back yard, where Mr. Merryjingle's pair-horse buggy is waiting for Mr. Merryjingle to finish his twentieth last glass, you see a big red mound rising above the stable, and know that the engine is pumping night and day in the Golden Tribute Reef.

But all the hotel-keepers of Grumbler's Gully are not so elegant as Mr. Bilberry. There is Polwheal, for example, the gigantic Cornishman, who lives in the big red building opposite the court-house. Polwheal considers his hotel a better one than the Golden Tribute, and swears largely when visitors of note stop at Bilberry's. For Polwheal's hotel is of brick, and being built in the "good old times," cost something like a shilling a brick to erect; whereas Bilberry's is but a wooden structure, and not very substantial at that. The inmate of Bilberry's can hear his right-hand neighbour clean his teeth, and can trace the various stages of his left-hand neighbour going to bed—commencing with the scratching of a safety match, and ending with the clatter of hastily deposited boots. When the county-court sits at Grumbler's Gully, and the barristers put up there, it is notorious that Bilberry is driven politely frantic by his efforts to put Mr. Mountain, who snores with a sound like the peculiar noise made by a circular saw, in some room where his slumbers will not be the cause of wakefulness in others. It is even reported that a distinguished barrister, after in vain plugging his ears with cotton wool, was compelled one sultry night to take

his blankets and "coil" on the wood heap, in order to escape from the roaring of Mr. Mountain's fitful diapason. I, myself, tossing in agony three rooms off, have been enabled to accurately follow the breathing of that worthy man, and to trace how the grunt swells into a rumble, the rumble reaches a harsh grating sound, which broadens into the circular-saw movement until glasses ring, roofs shake, and the listener, convinced that in another instant Mountain must either suffocate or burst, hears with relief the terrific blast soften to a strangled whistle, and finally die away in a soothing murmur full of deceitful promises of silence. Now at Polwheal's you have none of this annoyance, but then Polwheal's liquor is not so good as Bilberry's, nor is his table so well provided. How often, with the thermometer at a hundred, have I shuddered at a smoking red lump of boiled beef, with Polwheal in a violent perspiration looming above it in a cloud of greasy steam! But Polwheal has his patrons, and many a jorum of whisky-hot has been consumed in that big parlour, where the Quartzborough Chronicle of the week before last lies perpetually on the table. Then there is Cock-eyed Harry's, where the "boys" dance, and where a young lady, known to fame as the Chestnut Filly, was wont to dispense the wine-cup. Also, there was the establishment presided over by Mr. Corkison, commonly called Boss Corkison, who dressed elaborately in what he imagined to be the height of Melbourne fashion, owned half the Antelope Reef, and couldn't write his own name. Boss was an ingenious fellow, however, and wishing to draw a cheque, would say to any respectable stranger, "Morning, sir! A warm day! Have a drink, sir! Me name's Corkison! John, a little hard stuff! Me hand shakes, sir. Up last night with a few roaring dogs drinking hot whisky. Hot whisky is the very devil, sir!" Upon the stranger drinking—and strangers were not often backward in accepting hospitality—Boss would pull from his fashionable coat-pocket a fat cheque-book, and would insinuatingly say, "Sir, I will be obliged if you will draw a chick for me" (he always spoke of "chicks") "for ten pounds, sir. Jeremiah Corkison: I will touch the pen. Sir, I am obliged to you." If the stranger was deceived by this subterfuge, Boss would waylay him for days, with the "chicks," getting bigger and bigger, and his hand shakier and more shaky.

Amongst the minor houses I may men-

tion Tom Tuff's store, where one drank Hennessy in tin pots, and played loo in the back parlour; and the great Irish house, where you got nothing but Irish whisky and patriotism. I have no time to do more than allude to the Morning Star, Reefer's Joy, the Rough and Ready, or the twenty other places of resort.

Leaving hotels for awhile, let us walk down Main-street. Society in Grumbler's Gully is very mixed. I suppose that the rich squatters who live round about consider themselves at the top of the tree; while the resident police magistrate, the resident barrister, the Church of England clergyman, the Roman Catholic priest, and the managers of the banks, sit on the big limbs, leaving the solicitors, rich store-keepers, and owners of claims to roost on the lower branches, and the working miners, &c., to creep into the holes in the bare ground. Of course, the place is eaten up with scandal, and saturated with petty jealousy. The Church of England clergyman will not speak to the Roman Catholic priest, and both have sworn eternal enmity to the Presbyterian minister. The wife of the resident magistrate is at feud with the wife of the resident barrister, and the wives of the bank managers don't recognise the wives of the solicitors. If you call on Mrs. Kirkincroft, she will tell you—after you have heard how difficult it is to get servants, and that there had been no water in the tank for two days—that sad story of Mrs. Partridge and Mr. Quail from Melbourne, and how Mr. Partridge threw a glass of brandy-and-water over Mrs. Partridge, and how Mr. Quail went into Mr. Pounce's office and cried like a child, with his head on a bundle of mining leases. If you call on Mrs. Pontifex she will inform you—after you have heard that there has been no water in the tank for two days, and how difficult it is to get servants—that Mrs. Kirkincroft's papa was a butcher at Rowdy Flat, and that Mr. Kirkincroft himself made his money by keeping a public-house on the road to Bendigo. Mrs. Partridge has a very pretty history of Mrs. Pontifex's aunt, who came out in the same ship with Mr. Partridge's cousin, and who was quite notorious for her flirtations during the voyage; and Mrs. Partridge, who is a vicious, thin-lipped, little dark woman, pronounces the word "flirtation" as if it included everything that was bad. You learn how Tom Twotooth ran away with Bessy Brokenmouth, and how old Brokenmouth took his horse, Alexander the Great,

out of the stables in the middle of the night and galloped after them to the Great Eastern, only to find the floods out below Proud's Ferry, and the roads impassable. You hear how Jack Bragford lost over a hundred pounds to Doctor Splint, and how Jack drew a bill which was duly dishonoured, thereby compelling poor Sugman Sotomayordesoto, the wine and spirit merchant (who is as generous as becomes a man in whose veins runs the blood of Old Castile), to impoverish himself in order to pay the money. There are current in Grumbler's Gully marvellous scandals respecting the parson, the priest, and the police magistrate—scandals which, though they are obviously lies, are nevertheless eagerly credited by dwellers round about. There are strong-flavoured stories—old jokes such as our grandfathers chuckled at—told concerning the publicans, the miners, and the borough councillors; and a resident of Grumbler's Gully would be quite indignant if you hinted to him that you had "heard that story before."

But to come back to Main-street. Its architecture is decidedly irregular. A bank shoulders a public-house, a wooden shanty nestles under the lee of a brick and iron store. Everything is desperately new. The bricks even look as if they had been but a few days baked, and the iron roof of the Grumbler's Gully Emporium and Quartzborough Magazin des Modes has not as yet lost its virgin whiteness. The red dust is everywhere. The white silk coat of Boss Corkison, looking for the stranger, is powdered with it; and the black hat, vest, trousers, and boots of Jabez Hick—Jabez P. Hick he insists on signing himself—are marked with red smudges. Mr. Hick is a very smart Yankee (there are one or two in Grumbler's Gully), and is the proprietor of the emporium. He has also a share in the General Washington United, and has been down to the dam this afternoon to look at the small amount of water which yet remains there. The dust lies thickly on the hood of Mr. Salthide's buggy, which stands at the door of Copperas the ironmonger, and ruins the latest Melbourne toilettes of Mrs. Partridge and Mrs. Pontifex, who make believe to shop in Main-street daily from three to five. But the peculiarity of Main-street is, as we have said, its incongruous newness. Around are solemn purple hills, with their hidden mysteries of swamp and wilderness; and here, on the backbone of this quartz ridge, in the midst

of a dirty, dusty, unsightly mud-patch, punched with holes and disfigured with staring yellow mounds, are fifty or sixty straggling wooden, iron, and brick buildings, in which live people of all ranks of society, of all nations, of all opinions, but every one surrounded by his or her particular aureole of civilisation, and playing the latest music, drinking the fashionable brand of brandy, reading the latest novels, and taking the most lively interest in the Duke of Edinburgh, the Hospital Ball, the Prussian war, and the appalling fact that oysters in London are positively three shillings a dozen. A coach, blundering and rattling at the heels of four smoking horses, drops upon them twice a day from out the Bush, and the coachman delivers his mails, skims a local paper, has a liquor, tells the latest joke (made in Melbourne, perhaps, twenty-four hours before), and then blunders and rattles away again through the lonely gum-tree forest, until he drops upon just such another place, with just such another population, at the next quartz out-cropping, fifty miles away. Amidst all this there is no nationality; the Frenchman, German, and Englishman, all talk confidently about "going home;" and if by any chance some old man, with married daughters, thinks he will die in the colony, he never by any chance expresses a wish to leave his bones in the horribly matter-of-fact cemetery at Grumbler's Gully.

Close beside the hospital (a fine building, containing fifty beds, and supported by voluntary contributions) is the church, and over against the church is the chapel, and glaring viciously at both of them, in an underbred way, is a meeting-house. Religion, or rather difference of religion, is a noted feature in Grumbler's Gully. Formerly, the inhabitants might have been divided into two classes, teetotallers and whisky-hot men. There was a club called the Whisky-hot Club, at Polwheal's, each member of which was pledged to drink ten whiskies-hot per noctem, the qualification for membership being three certificated fits of delirium tremens; but of late these broad distinctions have been broken down, and the town now boasts five sects, each of which devoutly believes in the ultimate condemnation of the other four. There is a Band of Hope at Grumbler's Gully, likewise a Tent of Rechab. The last has fallen into some disrepute since it was discovered by a wandering analytical chemist that Binks Brothers,

who were affiliated Jonadabers in the third degree, and who supplied the camp with teetotal liquids, habitually put forty per cent of proof-spirit into the Hallelujah Cordial. There was quite a run upon Hallelujah for a few days after this discovery. The moving religious element, however, in Grumbler's Gully is a Mr. Jark. Jark was a cabinet-maker when yet in darkness, and did not get "called" until he had been twice insolvent. He went so near fraudulency the second time that it is supposed that his imminent danger converted him. Jark is a short, squab, yellow-faced, black-toothed, greasy-fingered fellow, with a tremendous power of adjective. When he prays he is very abusive to his fellow-creatures, and seems to find intense consolation in thinking everybody around him deceitful, wicked, and hard-hearted. To hear him denounce this miserable world, you would think that, did he suddenly discover that some people were very hopeful and happy in it, he would suffer intense pain. He travels about the country "preaching the word," which means, I am afraid, sponging on the squatters, and has written a diary, Jark's Diary, published by subscription, which sets forth his wanderings and adventures. Jark is a self-seeking, cunning dog, who is fit for nothing but the vocation he follows, namely, that of "entering widows' houses, and for a pretence making long prayers." Yet he has a large following, and crowds the chapel when he preaches. The result is, that all the rationalistic-thinking men in the township—and there are some half-dozen—disgusted with the hypocrisy and vulgarity of this untaught teacher, have come to consider all clergymen knaves and fools, and to despise all religion.

These enlightened persons hold meetings at the Morning Star Hotel, and settle the universe quite comfortably. They are especially great at such trifling subjects as The Cause of Poverty, Our Social Relations, The Origin of Species, Whence do We Come? Whither do We Go? and so on. Indeed, Grumbler's Gully was at one time denounced by the opposition (Barker's Flat) journal as having dangerous tendencies to pure Buddhism. The local journal, however, retorted with some ingenuity that the Barker's Flats were already far gone in the pernicious doctrines of Fo, and that it was well known that Hung Fat, the Chinese interpreter, held nightly séances in Barker's Flat in order to expound the teachings of Confucius.

A word about the local literature. The Grumbler's Gully Gazette is like all other country papers—whatever its editor chooses to make it. Local news is scarce. An inch of telegram, a borough council riot, and one or two police-court cases will not make a paper; and the leading article on the alluvial diggings, Mr. Tagrag's speech on the budget, Mr. Bobtail's proposition for levelling the Gipp's Land Ranges to fill up the Sandridge lagoon, or what not, once written, "cuttings" become things of necessity, and Daw, the editor, "cats" remarkably well. Daw is a capital amateur actor, and a smart journalist. His leaders can be good if he likes to put his heart into his work, and every now and then a quaint original sketch or pathetic story gives Grumbler's Gully a fillip. Daw writes about four columns a day, and is paid two hundred and fifty pounds a year. His friends say he ought to be in Melbourne, but he is afraid to give up a certainty, so he stays on at the Gully, editing his paper and narrowing his mind, and yearning for some intellectual intercourse with his fellow-creatures. To those who have not lived in a mining township, the utter dullness of Daw's life is incomprehensible. There is a complete lack of anything like cultivated mental companionship, and the three or four intellects who are above the dead-level do their best to reduce their exuberant acuteness by excess of whisky and water. The club, the reading-room, the parliament, the audience that testifies approval and appreciation, are all found in one place—the public-house bar. To obtain a criticism or a suggestion, one is compelled to drink a nobbler of brandy. The life of an up-country editor is the life of Sisyphus, the higher up the hill he rolls his stone, with the more violence does it tumble back upon him. "You want an editor?" said a hopeful new chum to the lucky job-printer who owned the Blanket Flat Mercury; "I have the best testimonials, and have written largely for the English press." The man of advertisements scanned the proffered paper. "Clever! sober! industrious! My good sir, you won't do for me. I want a man as is blazing drunk half his time, and who can just knock off a smart thing when I tell him." "But who edits the paper then?" asked the applicant. "Who?" returned the proprietor, flourishing his scissors over his head in indignant astonishment, "why I does! All you'll have to do is to correct the spellin', and put in the personalities!"

It is remarkable that in this free colony, where everybody is so tremendously equal, the tyranny of cash is carried to a greater extent than in any other country on the face of the earth. Men come to Australia to get rich, and if they don't get rich they go to the wall. In Melbourne one can in a measure escape the offensive patronage of the uneducated wealthy; but in a mining township, where life is nothing but a daring speculation, the brutal force of money is triumphant.

But it is time to "have a drink"—the chief amusement of the place. If we cannot imitate these jolly dogs of reef owners, who start from Polwheal's at ten A.M., and drink their way to Bilberry's by two P.M., working back again to unlimited loo and whisky-hot by sundown, it is perhaps better for us; but we must at all events conform, in some degree, to the manners and customs of the place. And the jollity of Grumbler's Gully may be summed up in the two words, generally used to convey an invitation to drink, "What's yours?"

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXIV. "A LITTLE MUSIC."

ON that evening "the Braham Nagles," as they were called collectively, were to attend at "a little music" given by the clergyman, who had asked Mr. Doughty to a little quiet dinner, with a few friends to come in the evening. As the Braham Nagles "lived with the rose," it was felt that their company would help to secure that flower itself, so coveted by all Brickford; and the clergyman and his family, presuming on the service they had rendered to Mr. Doughty in ejecting the old organist, determined to strike boldly for the prize on their own account. As we have seen, there was a little coolness between the brothers Gardiner since the day when Will Gardiner had begun to divine that his relation was making secret advances to the golden calf. So here was a new element in the competition. The clerical Gardiners were not so well off as the secular Gardiners, and this extravagance of the dinner was not quite warranted; but the heads of the family had agreed that "some exertion should be made for the children," and that if they were to strike at all, they must strike quickly.

As everything that took place in Brick-

ford circles became known to every one living there, this proceeding had excited much bitterness in the soul of Mrs. William Gardiner, a pushing, determined woman, not overcharged with delicacy, and who was supposed to have a great deal of the gift known as "management." She was one of those persons who, if there was a plain, disagreeable speech to be said, said it without scruple or compunction for the feelings of the person she addressed. For the parson's lady she had always infinite contempt, as for one she called "a poor creature;" and their bold bid for the favour of the golden calf seemed to her nothing but impertinence, and a very clumsy piece of impertinence too. However, as the two families were celebrated for their affection, and the brothers were considered the Damon and Pythias of Brickford, there was no apparent change in their relations, and Mr. and Mrs. William Gardiner attended in state the "little music" in the evening.

The dinner party consisted of Mr. Doughty, who seemed not at all well, Mr. and Miss Braham Nagle, the new Doctor Spooner, and another clergyman. It was a dreary, fussy entertainment: all "effort" on the part of the hosts, with none on the side of the guests. The clerical Gardiners, being modest in their aims, it will be seen, did not much care to interfere between the rich man and the Nagles, feeling powerless for any grand schemes of the kind, but were content to obtain such sort of jackal's share as could be got from the goodwill or generosity of either party. They had, besides, heartily accepted the new Brickford theory that all danger of anything taking place between Mr. Doughty and Corinna was now over.

Mr. Nagle was in his greatest vein, and recurred, now plaintively, now triumphantly, to his great master. He told new stories of Grimani, and explained that "it was hopeless now to look for style in the world," and that the "art of oiling the voice" was now confined to those few who had the tradition. "A few of us," he said, "can do it, but it will soon be utterly lost."

Doctor Spooner asked innocently: "And can you really oil the human voice?"

"Just as one would a cart-wheel," Mr. Nagle replied. "It works along the larynx, squeaking and grinding; you call in a professional person, who lubricates, and softens, and bends, and mollifies; and after a course, a suitable course," added Mr. Nagle, with emphasis—"six, twelve, or eighteen lessons, as required, or according to agree-

ment—the organ glides along the prepared channel without friction, creaking, or—hum—inconvenience.”

“How singular!” said the new doctor.

After the diners had gone up to the drawing-room, the evening guests began to arrive. There were many whispers as people saw Corinna sitting up as stately “as though she were enthroned;” and many private wonderings “where on earth young Duke was.” And among these wonderers, the most conspicuous was Mrs. William Gardiner. With a smiling sympathy that lady found her way to Corinna, and squeezing her hand again and again, began smiling and nodding with mysterious condolence.

“All going well?” she would say, with a fresh squeeze of congratulation. “I know it is. Dear, dear! My dear, how pale and ill you look. But you must promise me, dear, that you won’t be fretting yourself.” Then, very mysteriously, “Isn’t he here to-night?”

She was celebrated for this pleasant and welcome style of talk.

Corinna did not affect ignorance or wonder, nor was she put out. But she was too proud to accept such thrusts without return, and could not resist saying:

“Do you mean my father’s friend, Mr. Doughty? He is here.”

The lady tittered with a great deal of meaning. It was hard to put her down.

“Oh, I wouldn’t allude to that, dear. Indeed, I didn’t intend it.”

And here was that gentleman himself coming up with the other gentlemen, looking very pale and ill.

The musical family were presently called upon for their performance, and Mr. Nagle took his place at the instrument in very different style from that of the first evening on which he had the honour of being presented to the reader. He had a lofty critical air: there was no servile and confidential panegyric of the pianoforte. He sat down with an air of rough criticism, as though he were seating himself in the saddle on the back of a horse on whose merits he was to pronounce. “A bichord of the old pattern, Gardiner,” he said, looking over his shoulder. “Might be more lively in the ivory business. Wants rebuffing. Never mind. We must only put the spurs into him.” And so he did, and away he cantered his fingers over the “ivories,” his eyes closing as if in exquisite relish of the harmonies. The Broadwood of the yellow tunks was now in the garret, and spoken of as “that wretched old jingler.” Mr.

Nagle’s instrument was now virtually Mr. Doughty’s magnificent “iron grand,” at which he pounded away daily.

CHAPTER XXV. STARTLING NEWS.

CORINNA was called to “the bichord” to give one of her songs. She chose Meyerbeer’s touching *Ah! Mon Fils!*—whose long-drawn and pathetic wailing went to the hearts of all present. The light of her large eyes seemed to glisten through tears; while her rich voice trembled with a pathetic tenderness. Of course Mr. Nagle, with such an opportunity, became, as it were, rapt to his favourite “seven-and-twentieth heaven”—his face upturned, and his head thrown back, while he seemed to be scrutinising the angle of the cornice; his mouth forming all the notes, while his fingers strayed about the keys as if it were he, Nagle, after all, that was extracting this feeling, this expression, this tenderness, from his child’s soul! He was “playing” upon her.

She had never produced such an effect upon the Brickfordians. They were hushed in stillness, and for the time forgot all the subjects of gossip which they associated with this young heroine. They were awed as under the influence of something etherial and spiritual. When the lament was finished, there was a hushed stillness more eloquent than applause.

The pale face of Mr. Doughty was lighted up with enthusiasm. He was beside her in a moment. Every eye followed the movement.

“Enchanting!” he said. “What a pity that one should be absent who would have been more delighted than any one here.”

Corinna turned to him, and with a voice that trembled slightly, said:

“I am glad you have made that allusion,” she said; “it shows that you are still pursuing the noble and generous purpose which you lately have had before your mind. If it be a satisfaction to you to know, I can tell you that you have succeeded. You have made me the object of these people’s attention, the food for their vulgar gossip, and you have mortified and wounded me to the quick. I do feel it, and have felt it all, as much as you could possibly desire. And yet I can tell you, you little know what you have done, your punishment is not so complete as you think.”

His lips trembled as he answered her:

“I told you before that you misjudged me, and you do so still. I will not pretend to misunderstand you, as perhaps an-

other would do. But I can tell you I have had no scheme of vengeance. And for what," he added, putting on his old sarcastic manner, "for what was I to avenge myself? Forgive me! With you I should be ashamed to resort to pretences or subterfuges. You know well what my feelings were towards you, and what I wished to do if I saw that it would have been acceptable; but I was wise enough to save myself. I did not wish to be ridiculous, for I am sensitive, more so than you would suppose."

"And I?" said Corinna, gently; "can you not suppose that I also have my share of sensitiveness and pride? I, the poor music-master's daughter, who live in a perfect glare of suspicion, envy, jealousy, and dislike . . . But that has passed now. It is enough that I saw, what perhaps no one else did, the refined purpose you have had in your mind ever since, of, I must say, humiliating me——"

"As I live, no," he answered, fervently. "I wished to save you, to open your eyes, to prove to you the worthlessness of the object on which you had—well, to which you had sacrificed—one that knew your worth and perfection. If this be vengeance, I confess it all. If this be humiliation—I own——"

It was the most unlucky thing in the world that Will Gardiner should have entered the room in his excited way while this interesting dialogue was going on. It might have led up to something that would perhaps have rendered further narrative unnecessary. But here he was whispering about the room eagerly, saying in scarcely suppressed tones that "it was shameful," "scandalous," and that somebody "ought to be kicked." Before five minutes every one in the room knew that young Duke had been ordered away, had exchanged from his crack regiment into one that was to embark for foreign service, and was gone!

Will Gardiner, troubled at heart with the news, for he felt that it made the situation dangerous again, could not yet resist taking "Old Doughty" aside to tell him. "A regular case of cutaway and desertion, for which he ought to be had up before the magistrate; but the poor girl! who is to tell her, or how? I think you would be the man; better than one of these fussing, meddling women, who would truss and spit her any day." But already he saw, with some confusion, that his lady had taken the pleasing office on herself, and was "sympathising" with

both, converged to hers as to a focus, to see "how she took it." Even the most delicate could not resist. The situation was rare. She was left in the lurch; where two stools were concerned, as the doggrel bard had sung, the result was nearly invariable. But her ally, Mr. Doughty, was again beside her. They thought she was acting wonderfully when they saw her smiling on him. She was, they thought, already trimming her sails, and trying to repair the loss; but she was saying:

"You can congratulate yourself on the success of your scheme. To-night must be a triumph for you."

He could not resist answering, sadly: "A triumph for my judgment. Yes; for I foresaw all this from the beginning."

"And you professed to care for me, and could expose me to this!"

Her father was coming over to make her sing again. Good, easy man, he had not heard the great news; he was declaiming to a small admiring audience how the great Braham had sung in Westminster Abbey, at the Festival, &c. He had now graciously condescended to allow his daughter to give them the "Cherry," the imperishable Cherry Ripe. Corinna's was a gallant soul. She never flinched for a second, and with all eyes bent on her, gave the jocund song with all trills and tripping graces in the true coquettish style, as though her heart were as light and careless as a bird's. Her eyes wandered to where Mr. Doughty was sitting, and settled on him a moment steadily. Perhaps she was singing at him to prove that his cruel purpose had not affected her. He listened to the close, then rose up, and stole away quietly without wishing good-night to anybody.

Then came a general buzz and breaking up. The centre of attraction was absent; so there was now no particular inducement for remaining. Mr. Nagle looked not a little bewildered when he found that his noble friend was gone. As for the sudden departure of young Duke, it scarcely affected him. He did not see it in the light that the public did. "The young fellow has gone for an outing," he said. "He is of a volatile description. A little too staccato in his motions, but a fine spirit. We shall make a singer of him one of these days."

"Yes; but see here, my friend Nagle," said Will Gardiner, who was really concerned. "How about Miss Corinna? He has been carrying on there very seriously. I hope to Heaven she has been sensible

little flirtation. As it is, the fellow has behaved shabbily. I always said he was a cad."

"Oh, leave it to me," said Mr. Nagle, who began to think it was an advantage to have the young man out of the way. "I know the right chord. Young people will philander a little, and no harm done. When I lead in the orchestra, I lead from my full score, sir."

With which rather enigmatical declaration Mr. Nagle began wishing good-night all round, and took his daughter home.

When they reached the Crescent, Corinna was given a letter privately by the maid, who had a look of sympathy on her face. In her room Corinna opened and read it:

I am very sorry I could not see you before I went away; but the whole has been arranged very suddenly. I am going out to India, and may not be back for years.

I have been driven from this place by the vulgar persecution of the people here, who would not allow me to associate with people whom I liked, without low remarks and impertinent libels. Only this morning I received some coarse verses in which your name and mine, and that of a third party, were made free with in the grossest way. They have succeeded in their ends. I am delighted to have done with them, as you know not what I have endured all the time I have been here.

You will say, why should I not say good-bye to you in the regular way, and see you again. I will tell you. Your father's manner to me has always been—forgive me for saying so—unpleasant. You yourself are perfection, a perfect lady, as my mother says, but he has somehow always jarred upon me. I never admired any one so much as you, or never shall again, and if I had not seen that you were, as my mother says, playing me off against another man—but there is no use talking of that now. It is plain to every one here that your family had designs on that man, and his dislike and jealousy of me was quite evident. I have now retired, and left the field open to him, wishing you all happiness, whatever be the lot in life that you may choose.

Believe me always your friend,
ALFRED DUKE.

Corinna read it quite calmly to the end.

"He was unworthy of me, and, after the few first days, I always suspected his devotion. Thank Heaven, I did not give him my affection, as I was tempted to do!"

We now turn to another house when that night closed in, and see Mr. Doughty pacing his room in agitation. "This is my triumph," he would stop and say to himself, "but what an unworthy one. What blind stupidity! She will only hate me for the mortification. I am not fit to be of this world; a child knows more, and has more wit. The ground is cleared, and what I thought an obstacle is gone, and yet I am no nearer. She will despise me for what she will consider nothing but the meanest, poorest exhibition of spite, the true part of the dog in his manger. What I have no chance of enjoying myself I can at least hinder others from enjoying."

He grew more and more agitated as he walked. "Is this to be always my lot in the world? Every blessing—first youth, then money—turned to a curse. I was young, and a man older, and more crafty in the world's ways, snatched what I loved from me. I am older, and have the same advantage, and youth comes between me and her. I was poor, and was despised: I am now rich, and my money stands in the way. I would be generous, and sacrifice myself, and yet events take this cursed shape, and make me appear as if I had brought all this about. Let her have him if she loves him. Above all, let her not have a contempt for me; I must be saved from that."

Mr. Doughty's servant heard his master pacing about in this fashion for some hours, and at last was summoned to his room to receive orders to have the things packed for the first train in the morning.

"But you are not well enough to travel. Doctor Spooner said particularly——"

"I am not going to travel," was the reply. "Be sure you call me in time."

Mr. Doughty was called in time, or rather was up and dressed before he was called, looking very haggard and worn, and, indeed, scarcely able to stand. Before seven o'clock he was at the railway, and had gone no one in Brickford knew whither. Had they known of his departure there would have been infinite wonder in Brickford, and perhaps infinite inquisition, at even the railway station, to ascertain "What on earth could have taken him away?"

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 222. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER XLVI. AFTER OFFICE HOURS.

NEXT day our doctor called. He was very kind. He had made mamma many visits, and attended me through my tedious fever, and would never take a fee after the first one. I dare say that other great London physicians, whom the world reputes worldly, often do similar charities by stealth. My own experience is that affliction like ours does not lower the sufferer's estimate of human nature. It is a great discriminator of character, and sifts men like wheat. Those among our friends who are all chaff it blows away altogether. Those who have the noble attributes it leaves all noble. There is no more petulance, no more hurry or carelessness; we meet, in an after contact with them, be it much or little, only the finer attributes, gentleness, tenderness, respect, patience.

I do not remember one of those who had known us in better days, among the very few who now knew where to find us, who did not show us even more kindness than they could have had opportunity of showing, if we had been in our former position. Who could be kinder than Mr. Forrester? Who more thoughtful than Mr. Carmel, to whom at length we had traced the flowers, and the books, and the piano, that were such a resource to me; and who had during my illness come every day to see mamma?

In his necessarily brief visits, Sir Jacob Lake was energetic and cheery; there was in his manner that which inspired confidence; but I fancied this day, as he was taking his leave of mamma, that I observed something like a shadow on his face, a

transitory melancholy, that alarmed me. I accompanied him down-stairs; and he stopped for a moment in the lobby outside the drawing-room.

"Has there been anything done since about that place, Malory, I think you call it?" he asked.

"No," I answered; "there is not the least chance. Sir Harry Rokestone is going to sell it, Mr. Jarlot says; just through hatred of us, he thinks. He's an old enemy of ours; he says he hates our very name; and he won't write; he hasn't answered a single letter of Mr. Forrester's."

"I was only going to say, that it wouldn't do; she could not well bear so long a journey just now. I think she had better make no effort; she must not leave this at present."

"I'm afraid you think her very ill," I said, feeling myself grow pale.

"She is ill; and she will never be much better; but she may be spared to you for a long time yet. This kind of thing, however, is always uncertain; and it may end earlier than we think; I don't say it is likely, only possible. You must send for me, whenever you want me; and I'll look in now and then, and see that all goes on satisfactorily."

I began to thank him earnestly; but he stopped me very good-naturedly. He could spare me little more than a minute; I walked with him to the hall-door; and although he said but little, and that little very cautiously, he left me convinced that I might lose my darling mother any day or hour.

He had implied this very vaguely; but I was sure of it. People who have suffered great blows like mine, regard the future as an adversary, and believe its threatenings.

In flurry and terror I returned to the drawing-room, and shut the door. Then, with the instinct that always prevails, I went to mamma's room and sat down beside her.

I suppose every one has felt as I have felt. How magically the society of the patient, if not actually suffering, reassures us! The mere contiguity; the voice; the interest she takes in the common topics of our daily life; the cheerful and easy tone; even the little peevishness about the details of the sick-room, soon throw death again into perspective, and the instinct of life prevails against all facts and logic.

The form of heart-complaint from which my mother suffered had in it nothing revolting.

I think I never remember her so pretty. The tint of her lips and the colour of her cheeks, always lovely, were now more delicately brilliant than ever; and the lustre of her eyes, thus enhanced, was quite beautiful. The white tints a little paler, and her face and figure slightly thinner, but not unbecomingly, brought back a picture so girlish that I wondered while I looked; and when I went away the pretty face haunted me as the saddest and gentlest I had ever seen.

So many people have said that the approach of death induces a change of character, that I almost accept it for a general law of nature. I saw it, I know, in mamma. Not exactly an actual change, perhaps; but, rather, a subsidence of whatever was less lovely in her nature, and a proportionate predominance of all its sweetness and gentleness. There came also a serenity very different from the state of mind in which she had been from papa's death up to the time of my illness. I do not know whether she was conscious of her imminent danger. If she suspected it, she certainly did not speak of it to me, or to Rebecca Torkill. But death is a subject on which some people, I believe, practise as many reserves as others do in love.

Next day, mamma was much better, and sat in our drawing-room; and I read and talked to her, and amused her with my music; she sat in slippers and dressing-gown in an easy-chair, and we talked over a hundred plans which seemed to interest her.

The effort to cheer mamma did me good; and I think we were both happier that day than we had been since ruin had so tragically overtaken us.

While we were thus employed at home,

events connected with us and our history were not standing still in other places.

Mr. Forrester's business was very large; he had the assistance of two partners; but all three were hard worked. The offices of the firm occupied two houses in one of the streets which run down from the Strand to the river, at no great distance from Temple Bar.

I saw these offices but once in my life; I suppose there was little to distinguish them and their arrangements from those of other well-frequented chambers; but I remember being struck with their air of business and regularity, and by the complicated topography of two houses fused into one.

Mr. Forrester, in his private office, had locked up his desk. He was thinking of taking his leave of business for the day; it was now past four, and he had looked into the office where the collective firm did their business, and where his colleagues were giving audience to a deputation about a complicated winding-up.

This momentary delay cost him more time than he intended; for a clerk came in and whispered in his ear:

"A gentleman wants to see you, sir."

"Why, hang it! I've left the office," said Mr. Forrester, tartly; "don't you see? Here's my hat in my hand! Go, and look for me in my office, and you'll see I'm not there."

Very deferentially, notwithstanding this explosion, the messenger added, "I thought, sir, before sending him away you might like to see him; he seemed to think he was doing us a favour in looking in, and he has been hearing from you and would not take the trouble to write; and he won't call again."

"What's his name?" asked Mr. Forrester, vacillating a little.

"Sir Harry Rokestone," he said.

"Sir Harry Rokestone? Oh! Well, I suppose I must see him. Yes, I'll see him; bring him up to my private room."

Mr. Forrester had hardly got back, laid aside his hat and umbrella, and placed himself in his chair of state behind his desk, when his aide-de-camp returned and introduced "Sir Harry Rokestone."

Mr. Forrester rose, and received him with a bow.

He saw a tall man, with something grand and simple in his gait and erect bearing; with a brown handsome face, and a lofty forehead, noble and stern as if it had caught something of the gloomy character of the mountain scenery among which his home

was. He was dressed in the rustic and careless garb of an old-fashioned country gentleman, with gaiters up to his knees, as if he were going to stride out upon the heather with his gun on his shoulder and his dogs at his heel.

Mr. Forrester placed a chair for this gentleman, who, with hardly a nod, and without a word, sat down.

The door closed, and they were alone.

CHAPTER XLVII. SIR HARRY SPEAKS.

"YOU'RE Mr. Forrester?" said Sir Harry, in a deep clear voice, quite in character with his appearance, and with a stern eye fixed on the solicitor.

That gentleman made a slight inclination of assent.

"I got all your letters, sir; every one," said the rustic baronet.

Mr. Forrester bowed.

"I did not answer one of them."

Mr. Forrester bowed again.

"Did it strike you, as a man of business, sir, that it was rather an odd omission your not mentioning where the ladies representing the late Mr. Ware's interests—if he had any remaining, which I don't believe—are residing?"

"I had actually written——" answered Mr. Forrester, turning the key in his desk, and slipping his hand under the cover, and making a momentary search. He had hesitated on the question of sending the letter or not; but, having considered whether there could be any possible risk in letting him know, and having come to the conclusion that there was none, he now handed this letter, a little obsolete as it was, to Sir Harry Rokestone.

"What's this?" said Sir Harry, breaking the seal and looking at the contents of the note, and thrusting it, thinking as it seemed all the time of something different, into his coat pocket.

"The present address of Mrs. and Miss Ware, which I understood you just now to express a wish for," answered Mr. Forrester.

"Express a wish, sir, for their address?" exclaimed Sir Harry, with a scoff. "Dall me if I did, though. What the deuce, man, should I want o' their *address*, as ye call it? They may live where they like for me. And so Ware's dead—died a worse death than the hangman's; and died not worth a plack, as I always knew he would. And what made you write all those foolish letters to me? Why did you go on plaguing me, when you saw I never gave you an answer to one of them? You that should be a

man of head, how could ye be such a mafflin?" His northern accent became broader with his access of excitement.

The audacity and singularity of this old man disconcerted Mr. Forrester. He did not afterwards understand why he had not turned him out of his room.

"I think, Sir Harry, you will find my reasons for writing very distinctly stated in my letters, if you are good enough to look into them."

"Ay, so I did; and I don't understand them; nor you neither."

It was not clear whether he intended that the reasons or the attorney were beyond his comprehension. Mr. Forrester selected the first interpretation, and, I dare say, rightly, as being the least offensive.

"Pardon me, Sir Harry Rokestone," said he, with a little dry dignity; "I have not leisure to throw away upon writing nonsense; I am one of those men who are weak enough to believe that there are rights besides those defined by statute or common law, and duties, consequently, you'll excuse me for saying, even more obligatory—Christian duties, which, in this particular case, plainly devolve upon you."

"Christian flam! Humbug! and you an attorney!"

"I'm not accustomed, sir, to be talked to in that way," said Mr. Forrester, who felt that his visitor was becoming insupportable.

"Of course you're not; living in this town you never hear a word of honest truth," said Sir Harry; "but I'm not so much in the dark; I understand you pretty well, now; and I think you a precious impudent fellow."

Both gentlemen had risen by this time, and Mr. Forrester, with a flush in his cheeks, replied, raising his head as he stooped over his desk while turning the key in the lock:

"And I beg to say, sir, that I, also, have formed my own very distinct opinion of you!"

Mr. Forrester flushed more decidedly, for he felt, a little too late, that he had perhaps made a rather rash speech, considering that his visitor seemed to have so little control over his temper, and also that he was gigantic.

The herculean baronet, however, who could have lifted him up by the collar, and flung him out of the window, only smiled sardonically and said:

"Then we part, you and I, wiser men than we met. You write me no more letters, and I'll pay you no more visits."

With another cynical grin, he turned on his heel, and walked slowly down the stairs, leaving Mr. Forrester more ruffled than he had been for many a day.

CHAPTER XLVIII. THE OLD LOVE.

THE hour had now arrived at which our room looked really becomingly. It had been a particularly fine autumn; and I have mentioned the effect of a warm sunset streaming through the deep windows upon the oak panelling. This light had begun to fade, and its melancholy serenity had made us silent. I had heard the sound of wheels near our door, but that was nothing unusual, for carts often passed close by, carrying away the rubbish that had accumulated in the old houses now taken down.

Anne Owen, our Malory maid, peeped in at the door; came in, looking frightened and important, and closed it before she spoke. She was turning something about in her fingers.

"What is it, Anne?" I asked.

"Please, miss, there's an old gentleman down-stairs; and he wants to know, ma'am," she continued, now addressing mamma, "whether you'll be pleased to see him."

Mamma raised herself, and looked at the girl with anxious, startled eyes.

"What is that you have got in your hand?" I asked.

"Oh! I beg your pardon, ma'am; he told me to give you this, please."

And she handed a card to mamma.

She looked at it and grew very pale. She stood up with a flurried air.

"Are you sure?" she said.

"Please, ma'am?" inquired the girl in perplexity.

"No matter. Ethel, dear, it is he. Yes, I'll see him," she said to the girl, in an agitated way; "show him up. Ethel, it's Harry Rokestone—don't go; he is so stern; I know how he'll speak to me; but I ought not to refuse to see him."

I was angry at my mother's precipitation. If it had rested with me, what an answer the savage old man should have had! I was silent. By this time the girl was again at the hall-door. The first moment of indignation over, I was thunder-struck. I could not believe that anything so portentous was on the eve of happening.

The moments of suspense were not many. My eyes were fixed on the door as if an executioner were about to enter by it. It opened, and I saw—need I tell you?—the

very same tall, handsome old man I had seen in the chapel of Cardyllion Castle.

"Oh! Mabel," he said, and stopped. It was the most melancholy, broken voice I had ever heard. "My darling!"

My mother stood with her hand stretched vaguely towards him trembling.

"Oh! Mabel, it is you, and we've met at last!"

He took her hand in one of his and laid the other suddenly across his eyes and sobbed.

There was silence for a good while, and then he spoke again.

"My pretty Mabel! I lost ye; I tried to hate ye, Mabel; but all would not do, for I love ye still. I was mad and broken-hearted; I tried to hate ye, but I couldn't; I'd a' given my life for you all the time, and you shall have Malory; it's your own; I've bought it; ye'll not be too proud to take a gift from the old man; my only darling! The spring and summer are over; it's winter now wi' the old fellow, and he'll soon lie under the grass o' the kirk-garth, and what does it all matter then? And you, bonny Mabel, there's wonderful little change wi' you!"

He was silent again, and tears coursed one another down his rugged cheeks.

"I saw you sometimes a long way off when you didn't think I was looking, and the sight o' ye wrung my heart, that I didn't hold up my head for a week after. A lonely man I've been for your sake, Mabel; and down to Gouden Friars, and among the fells, and through the lonnins of old Clusted forest, and sailin' on the mere, where we two often were, thinkin' I saw ye in the shaddas; and your voice in my ear as far away as the call o' the wind; dreams, dreams—and now I've met ye."

He was holding mamma's hand in his, and she was crying bitterly.

"I knew nothing of all this till to-day; I got all Forrester's letters together. I was on the Continent—and you've been complaining, Mabel; but you're looking so young and bonny! It was care, care was the matter, care and trouble; but that's all over, and you shall never know anxiety more; you'll be well again; you shall live at Malory if you like it, or Gouden Friars; Mardykes is to let. I've a right to help you, Mabel; and you have none to refuse my help; for I'm the only living kinsman you have; I don't count that blackguard lord for anything. You shall never know care again. For twenty years and more, an angry man and dow I've been; caring

for no one, love or likin', when I had lost yours. But now it is past and over, and the days are sped."

A few melancholy and broken words more and he was gone; promising to return next day at twelve, having seen Mr. Forrester in the mean time at his house in Piccadilly, and had a talk with him.

He was gone. He had not spoken a word to me; had not even appeared conscious that I was present. I dare say he was not. It was a little mortifying. To me he appeared a mixture, such as I never saw before, of brutality and tenderness; the scene had moved me.

Mamma was now talking excitedly. It had been an agitating meeting; and, till he had disclosed his real feelings, full of uncertainty.

To prevent her from exerting herself too much, I took my turn in the conversation, and, looking from the window, still in the direction in which his cab had disappeared, I descanted with immense delight on the likelihood of his forthwith arranging that Malory should become our residence.

As I spoke, I turned about to listen for the answer I expected from mamma. I was shocked to see her look very ill. I was by her side in a moment. She said a few words scarcely audibly, and ceased speaking before she had ended her sentence. Her lips moved; and she made an eager gesture with her hand; but her voice failed. She made an effort, I thought, to rise; but her strength forsook her, and she fainted.

PRESS TELEGRAMS.

PREVIOUSLY to 1869, and as long, in fact, as the telegraph companies retained possession of their own wires, press telegrams, under ordinary circumstances, could not be sent except at comparatively high rates according to distance. Of course there were exceptional occasions when special contracts were made for particular reports of important speeches and the like; but the news budget from day to day, supplied at that period by telegraph, was collected, edited, and transmitted by the telegraph companies on their own speculation. They alone determined what should be made public and what should be suppressed. They possessed the irresponsible power of giving prominence to certain items and classes of news, however insignificant, and of withholding other intelligence, no matter how great its public importance might be.

Practically, all competition or emulation outside the telegraph companies was impossible, as the companies denied to others the facilities they exercised themselves. The consequence was a close monopoly of all the most important news, concentrated in the hands of very few persons. Whether the monopoly was ever abused or not does not affect the principle involved, that such a state of things was calculated to be inimical to the public good.

It was in the fullest appreciation of these circumstances that the sixteenth clause of the Telegraph Act was framed, and under it the present system of press telegrams is worked. In this system the first principle to be noted and adhered to is, that no person, or body of persons, is to have, or can have, priority or preference over any other person or body of persons; therefore, the power of transmitting press telegrams is possessed equally by all who comply with the uniform conditions laid down. All alike have equal facilities afforded them for systematically operating throughout the whole country. Individuals, who think proper to do so, may operate in any locality exclusively, or as widely as they think proper, either from day to day or on special occasions only. In order to do so it is necessary, in the first place, to know and bear in mind the definition of press telegrams according to the Act, which includes any message in the nature of public news telegraphed to "the proprietor or publisher of any public registered newspaper, or the proprietor or occupier of any news-room, club, or exchange-room." In practice this has been freely interpreted to include hotels, inns, refreshment rooms, and other places of public resort; the test being that the telegrams or copies must be for publication or exhibition for general reading. Matter which is evidently of a private nature is liable to be charged as a private telegram, regardless of its destination. This exclusion of private communications refers also to matter, whether for public reading or not, which is in the nature of advertisements, sporting prophecies, or anything in furtherance of a private interest or exclusive speculation. Upon these points doubts occasionally arise, and the official rule is, when there is a doubt, to charge the private rate, leaving the dispute for subsequent decision. One rule is that a press telegram, to be treated as such, must not be addressed to the editor, publisher, or manager, or any other person connected with

the staff of a paper by name, or it will be treated as private. It must be addressed to the newspaper in accordance with its registered title.

The next point to consider is the expense. We are treating exclusively of telegrams within the United Kingdom, so that we have nothing to do here with charges for foreign telegrams. It is tolerably well known that the established rate at the present time for ordinary telegrams is one shilling for twenty words or fewer, and threepence for each additional five words, with threepence per message for copies. The great bulk of private telegraphing occurs during the day, leaving the main wires and leading offices idle during the night. By a curious set of coincidences, the heaviest press telegrams require to be despatched during the night, and it was perceived by the framers of the Act that the great offices, open for the individual convenience of the public during the night, as well as the wires communicating between them, might be fully utilised by supplying special telegrams at rates that would create an amplitude of special demand.

Night-time, according to the telegraph service, is from six P.M. till nine A.M., all the year round. Private telegrams despatched or delivered during that time are charged at the same rate as during the day, but press telegrams are then transmitted at the reduced scale of one shilling for every hundred words or fraction of that number, one hundred and one words being charged as two hundred. In the day-time, however, officially defined as from nine A.M. till six P.M., some kinds of press telegrams are most in request; therefore, though the offices and wires are apt to be fully occupied then, there is still a modified reduction upon press telegrams, the scale for them during the day being one shilling for every seventy-five words or fraction thereof, seventy-six words being charged two shillings.

But the advantage and use of press telegrams would be comparatively limited, but for the provisions of the Act with regard to copies—duplicates, triplicates, and so on—of the same telegram. The charges for copies are only (either on the day or night scale) twopence for every shilling charged for the original. Hence, if a telegram is sent to a newspaper at Liverpool, costing one shilling, a copy thereof may be sent to any other paper at Liverpool for only twopence more, making only sevenpence each; or, if the message be sent to four

papers, the original and the copies only cost one shilling and sixpence. This provision has been so liberally interpreted that it is allowed to apply to any number of various towns, and any individual, say, at Birmingham, desiring to send a shilling telegram to a London newspaper, may, at the same time, send the same telegram, say, to Jersey, Killarney, Belfast, Wick, Newcastle, and Norwich, the charge for the whole seven being only two shillings. The same scale would apply to every newspaper, exchange, news-room, or place of public resort in the kingdom, the only check upon telegraphing wantonly being that the sender is required to furnish a copy for every separate wire used.

Individuals desirous of availing themselves of these privileges are at liberty to do so at any moment, during ordinary office hours, with only one restriction, namely, that sudden press telegrams are limited to two hundred words each. When any one desires to telegraph more than two hundred words he must give twenty-four hours' notice to the secretary of the Post Office, stating particulars of the exact time at which he will require the accommodation, the places from and to which he desires to communicate, and the probable length of the message. Should the time named be during ordinary hours there is no extra expense incurred by this, but if the time named be out of office hours at the place to be telegraphed from, a small payment on a fixed scale has to be made to the clerk or clerks required to remain on duty for the emergency; and if it be also out of office hours at the place or places to be telegraphed to, corresponding payments must be made in every instance. By giving similar notice short telegrams may be arranged for in like manner out of office hours, and it is the duty of the clerk receiving the notice to arrange with the receiving offices accordingly. In cases of prearrangements for press telegrams, all fees and extra charges (if any) must be fully paid at the time of giving the notice; and if the time named be out of regular hours, and the sender exceed the time named for the despatch of his telegram, he must then pay the extras over again, in consideration of having detained the clerks so much longer.

Such are the primitive conditions upon which the system of press telegrams is based, and of which any one may avail himself whenever he pleases. But, with very rare exceptions, the system is seldom resorted to except by regular customers

who are telegraphing daily or hourly. Such being the case, it has been found that, as prepayment of every message involves first counting the words, which takes almost as long as sending the telegram, an arrangement for avoiding that tedious delay has become essential. To meet this point, every newspaper, upon payment of a deposit of twenty-five pounds is supplied with "passes," and every telegram handed in with a pass attached is forthwith transmitted without payment, the charges thereon being placed to the account referred to in the pass, such accounts being settled at short intervals, the deposit acting as security against bad debts. Newspaper proprietors having special correspondents in various places, supply them with passes, which save time on all hands, and greatly facilitate the transaction of business. These passes, however, being issued in sets in the interest of one newspaper only, are to be used for telegrams addressed to that newspaper exclusively, therefore they are not available in any way for copies, but only for one original each. Some of the principal provincial newspapers, in addition to these facilities, rent from the department special wires, at the rate of five hundred pounds per wire per annum, between London and the towns in which the newspapers are published, and have the exclusive use of the wire from six each evening until six the following morning.

Beyond this stage, there is yet further amplification of the press telegram system. Proprietors of newspapers which take a special stand as leading journals, or which cultivate a special class of news requiring telegraphic assistance, use the passes extensively to their considerable advantage; but those newspaper proprietors and other persons who merely want all the news of universal interest as quickly as possible, do not find it answer their purpose to employ their own telegraphic correspondents, but avail themselves of one of the telegraphic news organisations now existing for the purpose. These organisations may be formed by any combination of interested persons, for any class of news. They may be simply for mutual advantage in obtaining and transmitting news, or they may be for the collection and transmission of news by telegraph as their exclusive business, in the ordinary course of commercial enterprise.

Upon organisations of this character the public depend for nearly all the telegraphic news of the day. They collect it, centralise it, edit it, and despatch it systematically to

their subscribers in all parts of the country. So far, the existing organisations for the preparation of press telegrams have conducted their business with the utmost vigour and success—a success that must be growing and expanding continually. The arrangements between them and the Post Office for the classification of news and the systematic despatch of telegrams, are admirably efficient. It is an unceasing race of emulation day and night. The news organisations are constantly taxing the great resources of the telegraphic branch, and the branch is as constantly increasing its resources to meet the strain.

The great concentration of work in connexion with press telegrams is upon what is called the Intelligence Section of the service, at present located in Telegraph-street. At the office there prepared for the purpose, ten clerks are constantly employed in simply registering the receipt of telegrams as they flow in. Each one being entered according to its classification, they are put together in little bundles, and shot through a pneumatic tube to the instrument-room at the top of the building. There they are distributed to the expertest manipulators, presiding at instruments expressly set apart for the purpose.

For telegraphic purposes there is now an ample choice of instruments of various kinds, according to the class of business to be done. It is beginning to be generally known that there are telegraphic instruments which print messages in Roman letters without the intervention of a transcribing clerk; but this instrument is for many reasons unsuitable for press telegrams. The instrument best adapted is Wheatstone's "automatic," aided by Morse's apparatus for printing in its own special character, only legible to telegraphists. The message is first perforated in a peculiar way upon paper tapes during their passage through an apparatus for that express purpose. Two or more tapes may be passed through and perforated simultaneously, and each tape is thence transferred to a separate transmitting instrument, and, as the action of the instrument is governed by the preliminary perforations as the tape passes through it, the operator at that stage has only to turn a handle, and the automatic process of transmission is effected without the application of telegraphic skill. The instrument before mentioned is only equal to forty words per minute, communicated to one station only, whereas Wheatstone's delivers one hundred and twenty words per minute, and, if desired, does so

simultaneously at every station through which the wire passes. At the same time, as the perforating apparatus acts upon several tapes at once, and each tape is transferred thence to a different instrument, communicating along a wire of its own to its several stations, the whole country can be covered in every direction in an incredibly short time with the same message verbatim in every minute particular. This process throughout is only useful where the same message has to be sent to several places. It meets the precise requirements of the Intelligence Section, where it is habitually resorted to, and, viewing its completeness and marvellous capacity for its intended purpose, it may be pronounced to be the greatest triumph of telegraphic genius at present achieved.

Most of the press telegrams from London are sent along main wires expressly erected for the purpose; thus, nearly all sent to Bristol go simultaneously to Exeter, Plymouth, Cardiff, Gloucester, and Newport; those for Birmingham, in like manner, go simultaneously to Manchester and Liverpool; and those for Nottingham also to Sheffield, Leeds, Newcastle, &c. Communication with Scotland and Ireland is not so direct during the day, but at night special wires are released for the use of the Intelligence Section to Cork, Dublin, Belfast, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, and Edinburgh. All these chief towns have communications, along branch wires to secondary towns, and thence, again, along sub-branches. It is in the usual course for the same telegram to be delivered to hundreds of different places in common, and when an event occurs of universal interest, the resources already include the possibility of covering upwards of a thousand deliveries of the same telegram in a few minutes after the Intelligence Section receives it, without giving appreciable preference to any recipient, or prejudicing the interests of any other. For upon this point of preference or prejudice the bye-laws of the service have carefully supplemented the letter and spirit of the Act. It is provided that whenever there may be more than one recipient of the same telegram in the same town the copies must be, as far as possible, delivered simultaneously to each. Most of the ordinary receiving offices for press telegrams have the Morse apparatus for their reception, and, whether they have or not, it is the duty of the receiving clerk to transcribe, for which duty he is responsible. And it is also provided that "press messages should be

written as legibly as possible." Any person inconvenienced by the bad or illegible writing of a press telegram exhibited in any public place is entitled to an explanation, or amends if need be, from the office whence it emanated. Bad or careless writing is expressly forbidden, and anything like favour shown to one recipient over another is a grave offence, liable to severe punishment. It is the fault of interested individuals, knowing these things, if they submit to or condone the deficiencies of local officials, especially if they, at the same time, content themselves by vaguely inveighing against the Post Office in general.

As before pointed out, press telegrams are rarely (if ever) resorted to by private individuals, but there is no reason why this should be the case. The number of separate newspaper payments of twenty-five pounds each, essential to opening an account with the branch, is also very few, being only eighty-five in all. The remainder of the vast business of the branch is done with the combined news organisations, who have made it their special vocation. They are partly co-operative (newspaper proprietors being at once shareholders and customers), and partly independent, supplying telegrams to any one who thinks proper to subscribe for them, subject to the conditions prescribed by the Act. These organisations have connexions in about three hundred and twenty towns, and include something over a thousand subscribers of all classes. The work involved in supplying these various towns and subscribers is immense. It is difficult to decide which application of energy and ability to admire most, that of those who supply the news, or of those who transmit and distribute it. How the whole thing is growing is proved by comparative figures. The old telegraph companies, at the last, averaged in this class of business six thousand words per day during parliament, and four thousand words per day for the rest of the year. The mean daily average for twelve months is now about eighty thousand original words, and, the copies thereof being included, we get an average of six hundred thousand daily, so that the grand aggregate of words for the year, actually delivered and charged for under this head, is two hundred millions.

Great as this appears, and is, as compared with the time so far taken for its development, it must be borne in mind that the idea is yet in its infancy, and the machinery so far brought to bear upon it is in a corresponding state. When the time

arrives (in a few more weeks) for the occupation of the new premises, now happily emerging out of the delays and damps of the strikes and rains which occurred so profusely during the past year, the power of the Intelligence Department will be multiplied indefinitely.

Looking at the map upon which the diffusion of press telegrams is indicated, it appears to be not a bad criterion of the intellectual activity or somnolence of the respective localities. Reducing the aggregate figures down to their details, we find that somnolency predominates. Even in such a wakeful place as Manchester, the number of copies of each telegram is usually only eighteen, and eight or ten of them are generally for re-transmission, so that ten or twelve copies are made to suffice for a population of about half a million. Judging from this, the thousand or so of subscribers must be scattered very thinly throughout the country, and there must be considerable spaces which have never been invaded as yet by the familiar "flimsy" which frequently carries such weighty words.

The advantage of these often portentous communications must be relatively greatest the further their destinations are from London. Looking round the remotest borders of the map, we observe that Guernsey and Jersey are amongst those who appreciate this kind of knowledge. At the other extreme, Wick is amongst the enterprising, and the number of recipients in Scotland generally is large in proportion. But the most remarkable evidence of the energy of the extreme northerners is the case of the Orkneys. At present the government wires only extend as far north as Thurso, and some time since the leading men of the Orkneys grew restless at being excluded from the magic circle of the telegraphic spark. To meet the deficiency the Orkney and Shetland Islands Telegraph Company was formed, and they now have a cable of their own in full work for all kinds of telegraphic business between Thurso and the Isles. It is startling but gratifying to reflect that those hardy Shetlanders, with their bonnie chief town of Kirkwall, thus possess the means of receiving the leading news of the day within a few minutes after it is buzzed abroad in Cornhill or Pall Mall, and sometimes a few minutes earlier.

It is remarkable that Ireland by no means exhibits corresponding activity. The whole of the west coast, though supplied with wires, does not thirst much after press tele-

grams. Killarney and Galway are prominently conspicuous by their absence from the honourable roll, but Tralee and Ballyshannon are enterprising enough to redeem the character of that coast, which would otherwise be a blank. A very large preponderance of the telegraphic business of Ireland is with Belfast, Dublin, and Cork.

Time will soon open the eyes of the people who are content at present to forego the gratification and advantage which is hereby placed so temptingly within their reach. There is now room enough for dozens, if not hundreds, of additional organisations, and the more they offer to supply the greater will become the demand. Every individual who desires to receive press telegrams may pick and choose amongst at least forty varieties into which they are classified. Foreign news, parliamentary, stock exchange, markets, shipping, sporting, weather, and many others, are again subdivided into full, reduced, and condensed reports, and each subscriber may take one or all, or as many as he likes, paying only in proportion for what he agrees for. With these conditions before us we may venture to prophesy that before long it will be considered a contemptible place which cannot command its press telegrams. They are so cheap, and the choice of them is so wide, that they ought to be exhibited in the free library of every little town, in the cosy bar of every well-to-do innkeeper, and upon the walls of every village school where there is any proper spirit of advancement.

Twopence per copy, and credit given for that in countless instances! Who will venture to imagine the kind of accounts which have to be kept, in order to get at periodical settlements every week! Yet such is done, and done well by a very small staff, at present occupying a moderate-sized room on the top floor of the General Post Office.

TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE.

"WHAT'S the time now?"

"Nigh upon twelve o'clock, hang it all; and this little beggar's all I've got to show for it. It's out-and-out too bad, 'pon my word!"

So speaks, with pardonable irritation, Captain Charles D., skipper of the Danube steamer Mary, bound from Constantinople to Galatz and Ibraila, and at present lying in Varna Roads, with no immediate prospect of getting off again. The captain, an

inveterate sportsman, has improved the occasion by taking his gun ashore, and after a three hours' tramp under a real Turkish sun, through a never-ending swamp, has at length succeeded in bagging a kingfisher a little larger than an oyster, which I, with a fine touch of practical irony, am stuffing into an envelope by way of game-bag.

"Light your pipe, and let us cook our game, captain," suggest I, consolingly; "it'll just fit nicely into the bowl."

The aggrieved sportsman answers only with a grunt; and halting upon a rising ground (if the term may be applied to an eminence about as high as the crown of a hat), we survey each other's appearance, which the skipper concisely defines as "all mud barrin' the wet, and all wet barrin' the scratches."

"Now, sir," observes he at last, with that bitter grin wherewith John Bull settles down to the enjoyment of a good, genuine grievance, "this, you see, is Bulgaria—how d'ye like it?"

"Well," answer I, with a passing recollection of my recent perusal of Mr. Morris, "I should call it 'the devil's earthly paradise.'"

The captain chuckles in grim approval; and, in truth, the epigram is not so unjust as such criticisms generally are. The great roadstead, elbowing its way between the high broken ridges that run inland from the sea, has left only a narrow strip of level ground upon which Bulgarian enterprise has piled the reeking, pestilential town of Varna. A horrible place is Varna. Dirty houses tenanted by dirty men, dirty streets haunted by dirty dogs; nothing doing, and nothing expected to be done; sentries dozing on their posts, tradesmen asleep at their shop doors, beggars snoring upon the hot pavement; the very houses leaning toward each other across the narrow, filthy, rubbish-blocked streets, as if they were nodding to sleep likewise. The tall, narrow-eyed buildings stand up gaunt and bare in the blistering sunshine; the grey unending swamp looms drearily in the background; to right and left rises the huge black wall of the encircling mountains; and on the narrow plateau between the city and the sea appear long ranks of low green hillocks, showing where many a brave fellow who looked longingly forward to his first glimpse of the Russian helmets, was cut down ingloriously by the unseen blow of an enemy more deadly than the bayonets of Menschikoff or the cannon of Todleben.

"Well, anyhow, there's the station just ahead," says the skipper at length; "and the station-master's a chum o' mine, and he's sure to be there now; so I vote we go and have a yarn with him, and a drop o' summut to drink."

No sooner said than done; and, a few minutes later, we are standing at the door of a little rabbit-hutch midway down the huge platform, receiving a boisterous welcome from a big, bearded, jolly-looking man in a rough "wear-and-tear" suit of plaid. In a trice we are all chatting away like old friends, and (a matter of course with Englishmen abroad) abusing the country, the people, the climate, and our surroundings generally, with heart and soul. The station-master in particular takes a gloomy pleasure in assuring us that "this ere Varna-Rustchuk line ain't worth that; that the embankment's as rotten as a squashed water-melon, and one o' these fine days it'll just come down flop, and have to be done over agin."

"Well, I'll tell you what," remarks our new acquaintance at length, "I'll be through with my work afore long, and there ain't no hurry for you to go aboard. S'pose you step up to my old 'ooman (you know the road, Charley), and tell her to give you a monthful o' summut, and say I'll be up a'ter a bit."

Up the hill-side we trudge accordingly, the skipper leading the way, and are not long in reaching a trim little cottage with a small garden in front of it (looking indescribably neat and pretty beside the miserable hovels that surround it), at the door of which, with her two children beside her, sits our new friend's wife, knitting stockings with might and main. She is a fresh, comely, active-looking woman, apparently on the right side of forty, with a snug fireside expression; but a close observer may detect on the broad smooth forehead and round rosy cheeks the faint but indelible impress of former suffering; and through the ring of her voice, full and cheery though it be, runs an undertone of melancholy, telling of a time in the distant past when such sadness was only too habitual.

While the skipper (who is evidently an old acquaintance) is inquiring after various common friends, and being good-humouredly chaffed upon his "lookin' so nice and clean," I begin, as usual, by making friends with the children—fine sturdy little fellows of seven and five years respectively, with the health and vigour of the good old Anglo-Saxon breed in every line of their

sunburnt faces. As the elder perches himself on my knee, the wind tosses back his hair, and discloses a frightful scar across the temple, which (knowing the innate propensity of the ordinary Englishwoman to gossip ad libitum about the accidents and ailments of her brood) I rightly deem a fit subject of inquiry.

"This young man's been in the wars, I see; how did he come by that mark, if it's not a rude question?"

"Well, he comed by it in a queer way enough, and that's the truth; but it's reether a long story."

"Never mind—let's have it; a good story can't be too long."

"Ay, ay, you must hear that yarn," chimes in the skipper, who is plainly well up to the whole history. "Pitch us the yarn, old girl; it's you as ought to tell it by rights, seein' 'twas you as did it all."

"Well, wait till you get a mouthful o' grub," responds our hostess, who is already deep in a big, hospitable-looking cupboard. "We ain't got nothin' very grand to give you, but you're heartily welcome to what there is."

The table is soon spread, and the master of the house coming in opportunely, we fall to with a will; and the skipper, amid general laughter, produces his kingfisher as "a stand-by for supper." As soon as we have finished, I again remind my hostess of her promised story, and she begins as follows:

"Well, you see, 'bout two years ago, me and my old man, and the two little 'uns, was a-livin' at a queer little by-station on that new line from Galatz to Ploesti, which I dare say you'll have heard on. It warn't quite finished then, though the line was pretty well laid all the way; and the trains was only runnin' to the second station beyond us. We got good pay enough, to speak truth, but I wouldn't go back there agin—no, not for double the money! Sith a country I never seed in all my born days; all dust in summer, and all mud in winter, and fleas all the year round—let alone other things as shall be nameless. And then the people! bless yer, they'd no more idear o' plantin', or buildin', or farmin', or drainin', or doin' anythin' Christ'n-like, nor I have o' the man in the moon; and yet, to hear 'em talk, you'd think they was the finest fellows as ever walked the earth.

"Howsomdever, it's a sin to laugh at 'em, poor creeturs; for, a'ter all, they was born furriners, and couldn't help their-selves; and then, too, it's all along o' their bein' so unhandy that they has to pay us

English to do things for 'em; so it's just a kind o' Providence a'ter all!

"Well, as I was a-sayin', we lived on that 'ere Galatz line for a good spell, and got used to it a'ter a bit; though it warn't over pleasant in the winter nights, when the snow came right up as high as the winder, and the wind went rampagin' round our little place (it was only two rooms and a cellar) as if it had been a roarin' lion. So, what with that, and what with our havin' money in the house for to pay the men, and there bein' so many rips about, we warn't quite so comfortable as we might ha' been.

"One night (it was just a week a'ter little Sam's third birthday, I remember) there cum a knock at the door, and a voice singin' out as there was a message from the superintendent. So my old man goes to open the door (I was in the back room gettin' tea ready), and in comes two men, and one on 'em hands him a paper; but he'd hardly took it when t'other slips round behind, and knocks him down as flat as a flounder. I ran in at the sound of the tumble, and there was one o' the rips a tyin' my old man (who was quite non compass a'ter the knock he'd got), and t'other 'un outs with a big knife, and says to me, 'Hand over your money,' says he, 'or we'll kill the whole lot on yer.' I was so took aback at fust, that just for the minute I only stared like a stuck pig; but when he axed for the money a thought cum into my head all to once, and I says to him, 'All right,' says I; 'the money's down in the cellar under the charcoal barrel; take it and welcome, only don't kill us.' 'All right,' says the vagabone; 'but, to make all safe, I'll take this young whelp with me' (and he catches hold o' little Georgy, my eldest), 'and if you hollers out, or tries to play any tricks, I'll skiver him like a sheep.'"

Here she breaks off suddenly to clasp the child to her, and kiss him again and again, while a momentary shadow flits across the father's rough-hewn face.

"Well, sir, when he said that, 'twas just like a pour o' cold water down my back; but I thought o' my old man lyin' bleedin' there, an' o' the beggar's cheek in darin' to bully an Englishwoman; and I determined that, come what might, I'd be square with 'em yet. So I gives Georgy a kiss, and I whispers to him, 'Keep near the door,' and he understood me direckly, bless his little 'art! and went away with the great ugly blackguard as brave as could be.

"Well, down goes the rip, and tries to

move the barrel; but it 'ud ha' took two o' him to do it, and then they couldn't; so a'ter tuggin' and luggin', and nigh busting hisself, he sings out to his mate, 'Come and lend a hand, and bring the woman with you.' So t'other 'un marches me down into the cellar, and sets down the light for to lend a hand with the cask. The minute I see'd 'em both stoopin' over it with their backs to me, I knocks over the candle, catches Georgy by the scruff o' the neck, and whisks him out o' the cellar like a cat—only in my hurry I fetched his head an awful lick agin the bolt-ring, poor little chap! and that's how that 'ere scar cum there. But before the rips could tell what was up, I had the door slapped to, and the big bolt shot; and there they was, cotched like two rats in a trap.

"Well, if you ever did hear two fellars rampage, them was the two. They yelled and they swore, and they lambasted the door with logs o' wood and fire-shovels, and at last with their very fists, they got so mad. But, bless yer, they might as well ha' tried to knock down St. Paul's with a pat o' butter. The door was a double thick 'un, with big cross beams, and wouldn't ha' giv' in to nothin' less nor a cannon-ball; so, leaving 'em to drum away, I up-stairs, and cut my old man loose, and then out and h'isted the red lamp; and, 'bout ten minutes a'ter, the train (which gen'ly ran by without stoppin') spied the signal, and pulled up. So I got hold o' one o' the guards (they all knowed me), and told him what was up; and he called his mates, and three or four sodgers, as al'ays went with the train, and down they all ran to tackle the two beauties. But when we opened the door them rips was so took aback at seein' the crowd, and findin' themselves reg'larly nabbed, that they just giv' in as meek as lambs; and afore you could say Jack Robinson the pair on 'em was tied and bundled into the train, and away. And that, sir, is what I calls 'killin' two birds with one stun.'"

VEILED.

At old Egyptian festals, we are told,
Was aye a guest,
Who through the feast sat rigid, silent, cold;
Whom no one prest
To share the banquet, yet who still remained
Till the last song was sung, the last cup drained.
The cup, the song, the jest, and laugh went round,
No cheek turned pale,
No guest amazed did query ere propound,
Or lift the veil
To learn the wherefore one alone sat mute,
With whom nor host, nor friend, exchanged salute.

Usance and rose-crowned drapery did all:
That thing of bone,
That hideous skeleton in festive hall,
Evoked no groan;
No thrill of horror checked the flow of mirth,
Unseen, unfelt that grisly type of earth.
But did the host return when all were gone,
The lights put out,
The unseen presence of that nameless one
Might put to rout
All the gay fancies born of wine and song,
And speechless dread the fleeting night prolong.
At every hearth, in every human heart
There sits such guest.
We may not, cannot bid it thence depart.
E'en at the best,
We can but crown with roses, veil and drape:
The thing exists, though we conceal its shape.
We shroud our skeletons from public gaze,
And from our own;
Ignore their presence with life's lamps ablaze,
Till left alone
With festal fragments, wine stains, lights gone dim,
We feel them with us, icy, bloodless, grim.
Our nerves would quiver to unveil the bones
Of the dead past;
We lock them in our hearts, with sighs and moans,
To keep them fast;
'Tis but in solitude we turn the key,
And dare to look upon them as they be.

"DOUBLES."

THE "doubling" of parts, or the allotment to an actor of more characters than one in the same representation, was an early necessity of theatrical management. The old dramatists delighted in a long catalogue of dramatis personæ. There are some fifty "speaking parts" in Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth, for instance; and although it was usual to press even the money-takers into the service of the stage to figure as supernumerary players, there was still a necessity for the regular members of the troupe to undertake dual duties. Certain curious stage directions cited by Mr. Payne Collier from the old extemporal play of Tamar Cam, mentioned in Henslowe's Diary under the date of October, 1602, afford evidence of an early system of doubling. In the concluding scene of the play four and twenty persons are required to represent the nations conquered by the hero—Tartars, Bactrians, Cataians, Pigmies, Cannibals, &c., and to cross the stage in procession in the presence of the leading characters. The names of these performers are supplied, and it is apparent that Messrs. George, Thomas Marbeck, Parsons, W. Parr, and other members of the company, were present early in the scene as nobles and soldiers in attendance upon the conqueror, and later—sufficient time being allowed for them to change their costumes—as representatives

of "the people of Bonar, a Cataian, two Bactrians," &c.

In proportion as the actors were few, and the dramatis personæ numerous, so the system of doubling, and even trebling parts, more and more prevailed. Especially were the members of itinerant companies compelled to undertake increase of labour of this kind. It was to their advantage that the troupe should be limited in number, so that the money accruing from their performances should not be divided into too many shares, and as a consequence each man's profit reduced too considerably. Further it was always the strollers' principle of action to stick at nothing, to be deterred by no difficulties in regard to paucity of numbers, deficient histrionic gifts, inadequate wardrobes, or absent scenery. They were always prepared to represent, somehow, any play that seemed to them to promise advantages to their treasury. The labours of doubling fell chiefly on the minor players, for the leading tragedian was too frequently present on the scene as the hero of the night to be able to undertake other duties. But if the player of Hamlet, for instance, was confined to that character, it was still competent for the representative of "the ghost of buried Denmark" to figure also as Laertes, or for Polonius, his death accomplished, to reappear in the guise of Osrice or the First Gravedigger, to say nothing of such minor arrangements as were involved in intrusting the parts of the First Actor, Marcellus, and the Second Gravedigger to one actor. Some care had to be exercised that the doubled characters did not clash, and were not required to be simultaneously present upon the scene. But, indeed, the strollers did not hesitate to mangle their author when his stage directions did not accord with their convenience. The late Mr. Meadows used to relate that when in early life he was a member of the Tamworth, Stratford-upon-Avon, and Warwick company, he was cast for Orozembo, the Old Blind Man, and the Sentinel in Pizarro, and took part in a mutilated version of Macbeth, in which King Duncan, Hecate, the First Murderer, and the Doctor were performed by one actor; the bleeding soldier, one of the apparitions, and Seyton by another; and Fleance, the apparition of a crowned head, and the Gentlewoman by the juvenile lady of the company, the characters of Donaldbain and Siward being wholly omitted.

Harley's first theatrical engagement was with Jerrold, the manager of a company at Cranbrook. His salary was fifteen shillings

a week, and in a representation of the Honeymoon he appeared as Jaques, Lampedo, and Lopez, accomplishing the task with the assistance of several wigs and cloaks. In John Bull he played Dan, John Burr, and Sir Francis Rochdale; another actor doubling the parts of Peregrine and Tom Shuffleton, while the manager's wife represented Mrs. Brulgruddery and Frank Rochdale, attiring the latter in a pair of very loose nankeen trousers and a very tight short jacket. The entire company consisted of "four white males, three females, and a negro." Certain of the parts were assigned in the playbills to a Mr. Jones. These, much to his surprise, Harley was requested by the manager to assume. "Between you and me," he whispered mysteriously to his young recruit, "there's no such person as Mr. Jones. Our company's rather thin just now, but there's no reason why the fact should be noised abroad." Other provincial managers were much less anxious to conceal the paucity of their company. A country playbill, bearing date 1807, seems indeed to vaunt the system of doubling to which the impresario had been driven. The comedy of the Busy Body was announced for performance with the following extraordinary cast:

Sir Francis Gripe and Charles . .	Mr. Johnston.
Sir George Airy and Whisper . .	Mr. Deans.
Sir Jealous Traffic and Marplot . .	Mr. Jones.
Miranda and Soentwell	Mrs. Deans.
Patch and Isabinda	Mrs. Jones.

Among other feats of doubling or trebling may be counted the performance, on the same night, by a Mrs. Stanley, at the Coburg Theatre, of the parts of Lady Anne, Tressell, and Richmond, in Richard the Third. A Mr. W. Rede once accomplished the difficult feat of appearing as Sir Lucius O'Trigger, Fag, and Mrs. Malaprop in a representation of the Rivals, the lady's entrance in the last scene having been preceded by the abrupt exit of Sir Lucius and the omission of the concluding passages of his part. The characters of King Henry, Buckingham, and Richmond, in Cibber's edition of Richard the Third, have frequently been undertaken by one performer.

Actors have often appeared in two, and sometimes in three, theatres on the same evening. This may be the result of their own great popularity, or due to the fact of their serving a manager who has become lessee of more than one establishment. For twenty-eight nights in succession, Grimaldi performed the arduous duties of clown both at Sadler's Wells and Covent

Garden Theatres. On one occasion he even played clown at the Surrey Theatre in addition. It is recorded that "the only refreshment he took during the whole evening was one glass of warm ale and a biscuit." A post-chaise and four was waiting at the Surrey Theatre to convey him to Sadler's Wells, and thence to Covent Garden, and the post-boys urged their horses to a furious speed. It is well known that while fulfilling his double engagement he one wet night missed his coach, and ran in the rain all the way from Clerkenwell to Holborn, in his clown's dress, before he could obtain a second vehicle. He was recognised as he ran by a man who shouted, "Here's Joe Grimaldi!" And forthwith the most thoroughly popular performer of his day was followed by a roaring and cheering mob of admirers, who proclaimed his name and calling, threw up their hats and caps, exhibited every evidence of delight, and agreed, as with one accord, to see him safe and sound to his journey's end. "So the coach went on, surrounded by the dirtiest body-guard that was ever beheld, not one of whom deserted his post until Grimaldi had been safely deposited at the stage-door of Covent Garden, when, after raising a vociferous cheer, such of them as had money rushed round to the gallery doors, and making their appearance in the front just as he came on the stage, set up a boisterous shout of 'Here he is again!' and cheered him enthusiastically, to the infinite amusement of every person in the theatre who had got wind of the story."

At one time Elliston, engaged as an actor at Drury Lane, had the additional responsibility of two theatrical managements, the Surrey and the Olympic. His performers were required to serve both theatres, and thus frequently appeared upon the stage in two counties upon the same night. In 1834, the two patent theatres were ruled by one lessee, whose managerial scheme it was to work the two houses with a company and a half. The running to and from Drury Lane and Covent Garden of actors half attired, with rouged faces, and loaded with the paraphernalia of their art, of dancers in various stages of dress, of musicians bearing their instruments and their music-books, was incessant, while the interchange of mysterious terms and inquiries, such as "Who's on?" "Stage waits," "Curtain down," "Rung up," "First music," &c., was sufficiently perplexing to passers-by. At the season of Christmas, when the system of double duty was at its

height, the hardships endured by the performers were severe indeed. The dancers were said to pass from one theatre to the other six times during the evening, and to undergo no fewer than eight changes of costume.

In the same way the performances at the summer theatre, the Haymarket, at the commencement and close of its season, often came into collision with the entertainments of the winter houses, and the actor engaged by two masters, and anxious to serve both faithfully, had a very arduous time of it. How could he possibly be present at the Haymarket and yet not absent from Drury Lane or Covent Garden? As a rule the patent theatres had the preference, and the summer theatre was compelled for a few nights to be content with a very scanty company. On one occasion, however, Farley, the actor, achieved the feat of appearing both at the Haymarket and Covent Garden on the same night, and in the plays presented first at each house. The effort is deserving of particular description.

At Covent Garden the curtain rose at half-past six o'clock. In the Haymarket the representation commenced at seven. At the former theatre Farley was cast for one of the witches in *Macbeth*. At the latter he was required to impersonate Sir Philip Modelove, in the comedy of *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*. It was a question of fitting in his exits at Covent Garden with his entrances at the Haymarket. A hackney-coach was in attendance, provided with a dresser, lighted candles, the necessary change of costume, and the means of altering his make-up. His early duties as a witch at Covent Garden fulfilled, the actor jumped into his coach, and, with the assistance of his dresser, was promptly changed from the weird sister of the tragedy to the elderly beau of the comedy. He duly arrived at the Haymarket in time to present himself as Sir Philip, whose first entrance upon the stage is in the second act of the play. This part of his task performed, he hurried again to Covent Garden, being transformed on the road from Sir Philip back again to the weird sister. Again he left the patent theatre, and reached the Haymarket in time to reappear as Sir Philip, on the second entrance of that character in the fifth act of the play. The actor acquitted himself entirely to the satisfaction of his two audiences, who were perhaps hardly aware of the extent of his labours, but with very considerable strain upon his nervous

system. For to add to the difficulties of his task, his coachman, indifferent to the counsel that the more haste often signifies the worst speed, turning a corner too sharply, ran his fore-wheel against a post, and upset coach, actor, dresser, candles, costumes, and all. This untimely accident notwithstanding, the actor, with assistance freely rendered by a friendly crowd, secured another vehicle, and succeeded in accomplishing an exploit that can scarcely be paralleled in histrionic records.

But if doubling was sometimes a matter of necessity, it has often been the result of choice. Actors have been much inclined to undertake dual duty with a view of manifesting their versatility, or of surprising their admirers. Benefit nights have been especially the occasions of doubling of this kind. Thus at a provincial theatre, then under his management, Elliston once tried the strange experiment of sustaining the characters of both Richard and Richmond in the same drama. The entrance of Richmond does not occur until the fifth act of the tragedy, when the scenes in which the king and the earl occupy the stage become alternate. On making his exit as Richard, Elliston dropped his hump from his shoulder, as though it had been a knapsack, straightened his deformed limbs, slipped on certain pieces of pasteboard armour, and, adorned with fresh head-gear, duly presented himself as the Tudor prince. The heroic lines of Richmond delivered, the actor hurried to the side-wings, to resume something of the misshapen aspect of Richard, and then re-enter as that character. In this way the play went on until the last scene, when the combatants come face to face. How was their fight to be presented to the spectators? The omission of so popular an incident as a broadsword combat could not be thought of. The armour of Richmond was forthwith shifted on to the shoulders of a supernumerary player, who was simply enjoined to "hold his tongue, and fight like the devil." Richard slain, Richmond departed. The body of the dead king was borne from the stage, and Elliston was then enabled to reappear as Richmond, and speak the closing lines of the play.

Among more legitimate exploits in the way of doubling are to be accounted Mr. Charles Mathews's assumption of the two characters of Puff and Sir Fretful Plagiary in the Critic; Mr. Phelps's appearance as James the First and Trapbois, in the play founded upon the Fortunes of Nigel; and the rendering by the same actor of the parts

of the King and Justice Shallow in the Second Part of Henry the Fourth. The worst that can be said for these performances is that they incline the audience to pay less heed to the play than to the frequent changes of appearance entailed upon the players. The business of the scene is apt to be overlooked, and regard wanders involuntarily to the transactions of the tiring-room and the side-wings. Will the actor be recognisable? will he really have time to alter his costume? the spectators mechanically ask themselves, and meditation is occupied with such possibilities as a tangled string or an obstinate button hindering the performer. All this is opposed to the real purpose of playing, and injurious to the actor's art, to say nothing of the interests of the dramatist. Illusion is the special object of the theatre, and this forfeits its magic when once inquiry is directed too curiously to its method of contrivance. Still doubling of this kind has always been in favour both with actors and audiences, and many plays have been provided especially to give dual occupation to the performers. Certain of these have for excuse the fact that their fables hinge upon some question of mistaken identity, or strong personal resemblance. The famous Courier of Lyons, founded, indeed, upon a genuine cause célèbre, was a drama of this kind. Here it was indispensable that the respectable Monsieur Lesurques and the criminal Dubosc, between whom so extraordinary a likeness existed that the one suffered death upon the scaffold for a murder committed by the other, should be both impersonated by the same performer. The Corsican Brothers, it need hardly be said, narrated the fortunes of the twin-born Louis and Fabien dei Franchi, reasonably supposed to be so much alike that they could not be known apart. Mademoiselle Rachel appeared with success in a drama called Valeria, written by Messieurs Auguste Maquet and Jules Lacroix, for the express purpose, it would seem, of rehabilitating the Empress Messalina. The actress personated Valeria, otherwise Messalina, and also Cynisca, a dancing-girl of evil character, but so closely resembling the empress that, as the dramatists argued, history had confounded the two ladies, and charged the one with the misdeeds of the other. Like and Unlike, an adaptation from the French, in which some years since Madame Celeste was wont to perform at the Adelphi, is also a drama of the same class. But, indeed, works contrived for doubling purposes are numerous enough. And in

this category may be included the elaborate melodramas which deal with long lapses of years, and relate the adventures of more than one generation, and in which the hero or heroine of the earlier scenes reappears at a later stage of the performance as his or her own child. Here, however, frequent change of dress is not required; the character first personated, when once laid aside, is not resumed, but is supposed to have been effectually removed from the scene by death, generally of a violent description. It is to be added that the applause often won by the actor who doubles a part on account of his rapid changes of attire, are, in truth, due much less to him than to the activity of his dresser, a functionary, however, who is never seen by the public. Still, calls before the curtain have now become such common compliments that even the dressers of the theatre may yet obtain this form of recognition of their deserts.

The services of a mute double to assist the illusion of the scene, or to spare a leading performer needless fatigue, have often been required upon the stage. Such a play as the Corsican Brothers could scarcely be presented without the aid of a mute player to take the place, now of Louis, now of Fabien dei Franchi, to personate now the spectre of this twin, now of that. In former days, when the deepest tragedy was the most highly esteemed of theatrical entertainments, funeral processions, or biers bearing the corpses of departed heroes were among the most usual of scenic exhibitions. Plays closed with a surprising list of killed and wounded. But four of the characters in Rowe's Fair Penitent are left alive at the fall of the curtain, and among those survivors are included such subordinate persons as Rossano, the friend of Lothario, and Lucilla, the confidant of Calista, whom certainly it was worth no one's while to put to death. The haughty gallant, gay Lothario, is slain at the close of the fourth act, but his corpse figures prominently in the concluding scenes. The stage direction runs at the opening of the fifth act: "A room hung with black; on one side Lothario's body on a bier; on the other a table with a skull and other bones, a book and a lamp on it. Calista is discovered on a couch, in black; her hair hanging loose and disordered. Soft music plays." In this, as in similar cases, it was clearly unnecessary that the personator of the live Lothario of the first four acts should remain upon the stage to represent his dead body in the fifth. It

was usual, therefore, to allow the actor's dresser to perform this doleful duty, and the dressers of the time seem to have claimed occupation of this nature as a kind of privilege, probably obtaining in such wise some title to increase of salary. The original Lothario—the tragedy being first represented in 1703—was George Powell, an esteemed actor who won applause from Addison and Steele, but who appears to have been somewhat of a toper, and was generally reputed to obscure his faculties by incessant indulgence in Nantes brandy. The fourth act of the play over, the actor was impatient to be gone, and was heard behind the scenes angrily demanding the assistance of Warren, his dresser, entirely forgetful of the fact that his attendant was employed upon the stage in personating the corpse of Lothario. Mr. Powell's wrath grew more and more intense. He threatened the absent Warren with the severest of punishments. The unhappy dresser reclining on Lothario's bier could not but overhear his raging master, yet for some time his fears were surmounted by his sense of dramatic propriety. He lay and shivered, longing for the fall of the curtain. At length his situation became quite unendurable. Powell was threatening to break every bone in his skin. In his dresser's opinion the actor was a man likely to keep his word. With a cry of "Here I am, master!" Warren sprung up, clothed in sable draperies which were fastened to the handles of his bier. The house roared with surprise and laughter. Encumbered by his charnel-house trappings, the dead Lothario precipitately fled from the stage. The play, of course, ended abruptly. For once the sombre tragedy of the Fair Penitent was permitted a mirthful conclusion.

Whenever unusual physical exertion is required of a player, a perilous fall, or a desperate leap, a trained gymnast is usually engaged as double to accomplish this portion of the performance. When in the stage versions of Kenilworth, Sir Richard Varney, in lieu of Amy Robsart, is seen to descend through the treacherous trap and incur a fall of many feet, we may be sure that it is not the genuine Varney, but his double who undergoes this severe fate. The name of the double is not recorded in the playbill, however, and he wins little fame, let him acquit himself as skilfully as he may. Occasionally, however, doubles of this kind are found to emerge from obscurity and establish a reputation of their own. In 1820, a pantomime, dealing with the fairy tale of Jack and the Beanstalk,

was produced at Drury Lane. The part of the hero was allotted to little Miss Povey, who declined, however, to undertake Jack's feat of climbing the famous beanstalk, a formidable structure reaching from the stage to the roof of the theatre. It became necessary to secure a substitute who should present some resemblance to the small and slight figure of the young actress, and yet be sufficiently strong and courageous to undertake the task she demurred to. The matter was one of some difficulty, and for some time no competent double was forthcoming. One morning, however, Winston, the stage-manager, descried a little active boy, acting as waterman's assistant, at the hackney-coach stand in Bedford-street, Covent Garden. He was carried to the theatre and his abilities put to the test at a rehearsal of the pantomime. His performance was pronounced satisfactory. He nightly appeared during the run of Jack and the Beanstalk as the climbing double of Miss Povey. Subsequently, he became one of the pupils of the clown. The boy said he believed his name was Sullivan. Years afterwards he was known to fame as Monsieur Silvain, ballet-master, and principal dancer of the Académie Royale, Paris, an artist of distinction, and a most respectable member of society.

Mrs. Mowatt, the American actress, has recorded in her memoirs a curious instance of a double being employed in connexion with a dummy to secure a theatrical illusion of a special kind. The play, produced at the Olympic Theatre some twenty years ago, was an English version of the *Ariane* of Thomas Corneille. In the original, Ariadne, upon the discovery of the perfidy of Theseus, falls upon a sword and expires. This catastrophe was altered in the adaptation, and a startling effect produced by the leaping of the heroine from a rock, and her plunging into the sea, while the ship of Theseus is seen departing in the distance. It was found necessary that three Ariadnes, similarly costumed, and identical in appearance, should lend their aid to accomplish this thrilling termination. Mrs. Mowatt, as Ariadne the first, paced the shore, and received the agonising intelligence of the desertion of Theseus. A ballet girl, as Ariadne the second, climbed the rocks of the Island of Naxos, reaching the highest peak to catch the last glimpse of the vanishing vessel. The third Ariadne was a most life-like lay figure, which, on a given signal, was hurled from the cliff, and seen to fall into the abyss below.

The greatest difficulty seems to have been experienced at rehearsal in persuading Ariadne the second even to walk up the steep rocks of Naxos. The poor ballet girl had been chosen for this duty less because of her courage than on account of an accidental resemblance she bore to Mrs. Mowatt. "She stopped and shrieked half-way, protested she was dizzy, and might fall, and would not advance a step further. After about half an hour's delay, during which the poor girl was encouraged, coaxed, and scolded abundantly, she allowed the carpenter who planned the rocky pathway, to lead her carefully up and down the declivity, and finally rushed up alone." At a certain cue she was required to fall upon her face, concealed from the audience by an intercepting rock, and then the lay figure took its flight through the air.

The success of the performance appears to have been complete. The substitution of the double for Ariadne, and the dummy for the double, even puzzled spectators who were provided with powerful opera-glasses. "The illusion was so perfect," Mrs. Mowatt writes, "that on the first night of the representation, when Ariadne leaped from the rock, a man started up in the pit, exclaiming in a tone of genuine horror, 'Good God! she is killed!'" How this exclamation must have rejoiced the heart of the stage-manager! For one would rather not consider the possibility of the "man in the pit" having been placed there by that functionary with due instructions as to when and what he was to exclaim.

It is a sort of doubling when in consequence of the illness or absence of a performer his part is read by some other member of the company. In this way curious experiments have sometimes been made upon public patience. At Dublin, in 1743, Addison's tragedy was announced for representation, with Sheridan, the actor, in the character of Cato. Sheridan, however, suddenly declined to appear, the costume he had usually assumed in his performance of Cato being absent from the wardrobe. In this emergency, Theophilus Cibber submitted a proposition to the audience that, in addition to appearing as Syphax in the play, he should read the part Mr. Sheridan ought to have filled. The offer was accepted, the performance ensued, and apparently excited no opposition. Sheridan was much incensed, however, and published an address to the public. Cibber replied. Sheridan issued a second address,

to which Cibber again responded. Their correspondence was subsequently reprinted in a pamphlet entitled *Sock and Buskin*. But the fact remained that Cato had been represented with the chief part not acted, but read by a player who had other duties to fulfil in the tragedy. One is reminded of the old-established story of the play of *Hamlet* being performed with the omission of the character of the Prince of Denmark; a tradition, or a jest, which has long been attributed to Joe Miller, or some similar compiler of facetiæ. It would seem, however, that even this absurd legend can boast some foundation of fact. At any rate, Mr. Parke, the respectable oboist of the Opera House, who published his musical memoirs in 1830, is found gravely recording of one Cubit, a subordinate actor and singer of Covent Garden Theatre, that once, "when, during one of his summer engagements at a provincial theatre, he was announced to perform the character of *Hamlet*, he was seized with a sudden and serious illness in his dressing-room, just before the play was going to begin; whereupon the manager, having 'no more cats than would catch mice,' was constrained to request the audience to suffer them to go through with the play, omitting the character of *Hamlet*; which, being complied with, it was afterwards considered by the bulk of the audience to be a great improvement." Mr. Parke proceeds to record, by way, perhaps, of fortifying his story, "Although this may appear ridiculous and improbable, an occurrence of a similar kind took place several years afterwards at Covent Garden Theatre, when Cooke, the popular actor, having got drunk, the favourite afterpiece of *Love à la Mode* was performed before a London audience (he being absent) without the principal character, Sir Archy MacSarcasm." Altogether it may be safe to conclude that very few stories, however absurd, relative to plays and players, can be pronounced absolutely incredible.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXVI. A GLIMPSE OF HOPE.

THUS young Duke had escaped from Brickford and his entanglements there. Of course he might have managed a more respectable, and certainly a more honourable, mode of retirement; a few words with

Corinna, and he could have departed with notice, and in a decorous fashion. But the truth was this young man had a sense of guilt, and he knew that he dared not, under the calm, deep-searching gaze of Corinna, present his lame story, or request to be allowed to withdraw, though he knew that request would be at once granted. No serious proposal had, indeed, been offered, no formal declaration of the gentleman's love had been made. Still he had "gone far enough," as it is called—quite far enough to make him feel guilty. He was something of a gentleman, too, and he felt that if it once came to explanations so delicate, all would be over, and he must declare himself plainly. But his heart sank at the idea of the blood of all the Dukes commingling with that of "a common music-master:" he turned from the notion of Braham Nagle as a father-in-law with horror and disgust, and had Corinna been a *bonâ fide* angel instead of merely enjoying the complimentary title, he would have shrunk from so terrible a contamination. Then there was Lady Duke—the regiment—in short he had to fly. It was better to arrange the whole in the way he had done.

At all events here he was now, at an hotel in Southampton, feeling some compunctious twinges, but, it must be confessed, also feeling a great weight off his mind. It would never have done, he said, to himself: it would have been misery for the girl herself, this taking her out of her station; and they would have both heartily repented of it before long. They had neither of them a shilling. Why it was folly and madness, whatever way it was looked at.

One of the great Indian troop-ships was lying in the docks, preparing to take out the regiment into which he had exchanged. There was the usual bustle and business; the slinging on board of horses and baggage; the shouting and labouring of fatigue parties; the confusion of wives and followers of all kinds. Mr. Duke was in his hotel, taking breakfast, and, to do him justice, thinking with many misgivings of the step he had taken, and for which he was perhaps not wholly responsible, as the whole arrangement had been craftily planned by his mother. He found most comfort, however, in the repeated reflection that what he had done "was best for the poor girl herself," and finally came to think that he had really acted the part of a friend.

He had offered himself this consolation for perhaps the twentieth time, when a

card was brought in. As his eyes fell on it he could not repress an exclamation of impatience. Was it all to begin again? In a moment the pale face and spare figure of Mr. Doughty was before him.

"What do you want with me?" said the young man. "Why have you come after me in this way? Are you ill?"

"I have not slept all night," said the other. "I have not been well of late. Your departure has been very abrupt, and will seem strange to your friends."

"Well, you ought to be delighted," said the other. "I suppose the ground is now open for you?"

"I do not think so. You have been more fortunate than I have. You warned me some time ago that you would win in this little struggle, and I must own you have shown that you were right. I could have no chance with you. Still, you can have indulgence for my delusion."

A look of pride came into the other's eyes. This artful allusion laid him open to his more skilful rival.

"Well, I know what girls think in these matters," said the young man, softening, "and you know, too, that you almost made it a question of honour, threatening me. I couldn't draw back after that. She is the most charming, fascinating girl I ever met, and, I assure you, it cost me a hard struggle to leave her. But it was for the best. If I had money, indeed——"

The other was looking at him eagerly.

"No, no; you don't mean that. You think her beneath you, and her family. And your mother too——"

"Oh, not at all," said the other, haughtily. "I am old enough to choose for myself now. But I could not afford to take such a step, as neither she nor I have money. I dare not marry under twenty or thirty thousand pounds."

"And you would persuade me that this is your objection! I am not an old soldier, but I know something of the world——"

"Mr. Doughty," said the young man, starting up and colouring, "this is a very strange style. Do you mean to say I am not telling the truth?"

"On the contrary; I am sure you are. Then let me tell you how rejoiced I am to hear you speak in this way. You are mistaken as to Corinna. She has a fortune, and a large one."

"Oh! ridiculous!" said Mr. Duke, astonished.

"Yes; a fortune of the very amount you named."

Mr. Duke gazed at him with a bewildered air.

"See, you are bound by your own declaration. You will admit nothing stands in the way now?"

"And the fortune comes from——"

"No matter whence. I guarantee it."

Young Mr. Duke remained silent for some time, thoroughly mystified; then his somewhat slow intelligence was quickened, and, with scornful, flashing eyes, he exclaimed:

"This is a fresh trick, and cleverly contrived, as you think, Mr. Doughty; but it won't answer."

"Won't answer!" repeated the other, with infinite scorn. "How little you know me. I wished to give you one more chance of behaving like a gentleman and a man of honour."

"You will not draw me into a quarrel by your language, nor is there any chance that your chivalrous proposal will be repeated back to the family by me."

"Indeed I am not likely to suppose so," said the other, sarcastically. "I can be acquitted of that at least."

"I suppose they sent you on this errand; I mean the clever gentleman who would wish to have me for his son-in-law," said the young man, growing more and more angry. "But you must tell the truth when you go back. I have nothing to say about her, and stand to what I have said."

"Don't be afraid," said Mr. Doughty, with spirit; "there is no need of my speaking in the matter. You have taught her to appreciate you by this time. You said that, but for the want of money, you would fulfil your implied engagement. That obstacle is removed, and you still decline."

"I decline your money; it would be unworthy of me to accept it from you. I am a gentleman, and, hang it! it isn't fair of you to come to me in this way, and try to buy me, as if I was some common fellow. I dare say," added the young man, suddenly softening, as it began to dawn on him that Mr. Doughty, after all, might have been unselfish from the beginning, and was willing to sacrifice himself to see Corinna happy; "I dare say you mean well, and have acted more chivalrously than I could do, but still you don't make allowances. You see I am in such a hole, badgered right and left. My mother, you, Corinna's family, the wretched people at Brickford—all at me. You must make allowance for a young fellow in my position. And the best of it is," said the "young

man in this position," after a struggle, "or the worst of it is, that I believe in my soul that she does not care for me after all."

A curious eagerness came into Mr. Doughty's eyes.

"Not care for you?" he repeated.

"No. She is such a mysterious girl, and so full of delicacy about her position and all that, I really believe she is afraid of letting it be seen for whom she cares. My mother, who is a woman of the world, has said so all along."

A delightful suspicion of the truth began to fill his hearer's soul. But he was determined to be chivalrous to the end, to keep to that reserve in the matter which he had maintained from the beginning. Every step in advance which he gained should be independent of the money with which he was so cruelly weighted.

"Yes," continued Alfred Duke, more and more under the influence of a generous impulse, or perhaps thinking that he was thus making his own share in the whole transaction appear less objectionable, "she almost said as much to me the other day. See here, Doughty, I may as well be frank with you, and tell you more, as I have told you so much. But you seem ill and out of sorts. Anything the matter? Will you have something?"

"I am not well," said the other; "and when I go back I shall have to lay up. But you must forgive me for saying I do not invite this confidence or ask you for it. It is very generous of you; but still——"

"Oh, I don't mind. It's right you should know. The fact is, I own I took a dislike to you from the first, and did not like to be beaten out of the field. And then when you came in for that money, my pride was up, and I was determined all the more to beat you. Well, all the time I felt I was not up to her mark, and indeed she told me as much. She is so honourable and high-minded that she would have gone through with it, because she had led me to believe that she liked me. And I saw that long ago I could not stand all the fuss and confusion of leave-taking, explanations, and the like, and believing that she liked some one else, you see there is not so much harm done after all."

"Liked some one else!" cried Mr. Doughty, passionately, but again he checked himself.

"Yes, my mother has said it all along. I believe, and my mother believes that you are the man after all, and that she is afraid lest she should be thought to be looking

after your money. There you have the whole murder out, and I think you will say I have behaved with some generosity."

Mr. Doughty left his friend and late rival, after these revelations, almost bewildered. What had been told to him he himself had once accepted, in a fond complacency, but had been compelled rudely to dismiss. Now it all came back and seemed to be no delusion, being confirmed by the testimony of a person not likely to compliment; from whom, indeed, it had been almost extorted. And yet this sensitive, shrinking, over-delicate being was presently doubting afresh, tortured anew by the idea that no such good fortune could be intended for him; and that the young man, in his wish to save himself from the appearance of having behaved shabbily, would be eager to give an exaggerated colouring to what he had revealed. He still felt ill, with a sort of shivering all over him, and was indeed in such a state that Doctor Spooner would have pronounced him fit only to be in his bed.

"Yes," he said aloud, as he paced up and down the room at the hotel, "there can be no room for mistake after this. But there is the old difficulty still, how to make her pronounce her decision."

He was restless and anxious. A letter from his solicitor had followed him to Southampton, begging of him to come to town forthwith, and wind up the affairs of his inheritance, a matter on which many more pressing letters had already been sent. There were the family valuables, the plate and pictures, a library, and papers, the "residuary account" for the Inland Revenue Office, with other important matters. If he could spare a day or so to business, matters would be smoothed and immensely simplified. This would distract his mind a little, and give him time to think.

Now we shall enter on a somewhat more stirring phase of this narrative, which indeed professes, at the best, to be no more than the chronicle of the love of a middle-aged gentleman with money for the lovely Corinna, daughter to a poor struggling music-master. The ups and downs, the advances and retreats in such an episode, may be thought unworthy the dignity of romantic narrative, and the question at issue might be considered uninteresting, or at least be disposed of off-hand. Yet there is an interest and a sympathy connected with even so unpretending a little struggle; and the vicissitudes of a mind, however

humble in worldly station, may be as dramatic in their way, as some of the most exciting incidents of an ambitious story. "My mind to me a kingdom is," is a significant sentiment enough, and lookers-on and bystanders may find that "kingdom" in the minds of others, as well as in their own.

CHAPTER XXVII. THE GARDINERS "DO SOMETHING."

MR. DOUGHTY reached London and spent a good deal of the day there. His excited eyes and hot hand were noted by the man of business, who conjured him to get home as quickly as he could.

"I am ill, indeed," said the other; "and should there be any sickness coming on me, I may rely on your faithfully carrying out what I have directed."

The other assured him that he might.

Mr. Doughty then left, and reached Brickford late that night. On the following morning Doctor Spooner was seen hurrying to the house, and by-and-bye Mr. Nagle had mounted the imaginary charger he kept for dramatic occasions, and was cantering backwards and forwards between his own house and that of Mr. Doughty, drawing rein for a moment to tell a friend: "Poor Doughty struck down—seriously ill. Spooner says a nervous fever. Sir Fust Harold telegraphed for from town—expect him about two o'clock." Then he clapped spurs to his steed, and galloped on to make up for lost time. Somehow he could not help feeling exhilarated—not at the misfortune of his friend, but at the exciting times which were about to set in. A long and possibly dangerous illness; a lonely being, to be thrown entirely on him, Nagle, as the only man on whom he placed confidence—he, Nagle, director, commander-in-chief—nothing more welcome could be imagined.

"We are in," as he said, "for a downright serious piece of business." Everything was cast upon his shoulders; he must see to everything. And as a visible, tangible sign of responsibility which he styled "awful," as well as a sign of his being in possession and clothed with his office, a little bed, or, as he called it, "a stretcher," was sent up that very afternoon—an article of furniture that figures conspicuously in the many dramatic narratives of the exciting crisis that he furnished to his friends.

Mrs. Nagle was despatched to relieve guard, when duty compelled his own absence for a short while. But it must be

said that he threw his professional duties completely overboard, save in a few choice instances where, though he attended, he did not give much satisfactory instruction. He would sit at the instrument, allowing his fingers to stray away into mournful harmonies, while he dwelt on the suddenness, the terrible suddenness of the illness. "A man in the prime of life, a fine nature, and a such friend! I am not equal to this sort of thing: it has given me quite a shock," &c. He was, however, "equal" to booking the interview as a formal lesson, which was duly charged for. At the end he looked at his watch. "Bless me, I must hurry off. We'll just try the Swan once, though."

Mr. William Gardiner, who had been absent from Brickford on the day after Mr. Doughty's return, met Doctor Spooner in the street in the afternoon. From him he learned the dangerous nature of the malady, and hurried home to Mrs. Gardiner. The lady, already in possession of the news, was much excited.

"The poor fellow," said Will, with sympathy. "I hope he will pull through."

"Serve him right," said Mrs. Gardiner, "with his childish rushing about the country. When a man gets to his time of life, if he hasn't learned sense, he never will. And his idiotic behaviour about that girl! But those Nagles have already taken possession," continued the indignant lady. "That man has already established himself on the premises, and sent in his bed. The girl, I suppose, will follow suit, and do nurse, with gruel and all that. They'll make out he won't take anything except from her hand."

"Well, if he won't, it's the only thing to be done. But she won't lend herself to that sort of business. She's too high-minded for that. No, Corinna's no schemer, after all."

"Isn't she?" said the lady, growing more excited. "It will be only part of the game she has been playing all through. See how cleverly she's got rid of the young man who was in the way. You think everybody is innocent. You'll never do anything for your daughter or your family."

Will Gardiner grew gloomy and disturbed. "That Nagle," he said, "thinks Old Doughty and all his money belong to him, as his private property. He has some extraordinary influence over him—of that there's no mistake."

"And what business has he in the house

at all? A mere adventurer that has dropped down here from the skies. What impudence to thrust himself in between a sick person and his blood relations!"

"It is confounded impudence but what are we to do? Old Doughty's not a chicken; and if he chooses to hand himself over to all the strollers and fiddlers in the town, we can't help it."

"That's what you always say in these matters. Can't help it, indeed! I always told you that if you showed a firm front the fellow would not have dared to go so far. You are too soft and mealy-mouthed altogether. He ought to be just taken by the shoulders and put out of the house."

When Mrs. Gardiner spoke in this rather rough style, calling a spade a spade with the noisiest emphasis, it had the effect of annoying her husband, not so much with her as with himself, and when his eyes were thus roughly opened, he was generally ready to plunge into any course, however opposed to that which he had been previously running.

"But what can the man do," he said, after a pause, "if poor Doughty shouldn't get up again? They can't marry him on his death-bed to Corinna. She wouldn't do it if they wanted her. No, you won't persuade me of that."

"I'll tell you what they'll do, if they haven't got it done already; get him to make a will; don't you see? He is wholly and solely in their hands now. We ought to do something."

"To be sure," said Will; "we mustn't leave the field all to Master Braham——"

"Whom do you mean?" said his wife contemptuously. "Master Braham! We are the nearest relations—we have a right to look after him and take care of him, and see that he is not pillaged, or at all events wrongly treated, by mere strangers. He should have a proper nurse. There's Ledger, that nursed me in my last confinement, a most respectable, decent woman. She must take care of him; and until these people are got rid of, we'll see that everything is done correctly."

Will Gardiner looked at his wife with respect, and even with admiration. Here was something practical to be done, which he felt would never have occurred to him. He took his hat and went about the business at once.

CHAPTER XXVIII. SKIRMISHING ROUND THE PATIENT.

WHEN he entered the drawing-room of Mr. Doughty's house, he found Lady Duke

there waiting, while a motherly-looking woman was in the hall. The lady went to meet him with a torrent of "Isn't this terrible," &c. The London doctor was upstairs in consultation with Spooner, and "that Nagle."

"The poor fellow," continued she in the same voluble style. "What a way for him to be in. He is really alone in the world—cut off from his relations."

"Well, ma'am, I don't think he is quite deserted," said Will Gardiner with a twinkle in his eye.

"Yes, he is. These people have quite taken possession of him. Surely you and I, who are his blood relations, are entitled at least to see him, or look after him. Really, for their own sakes, they ought to do so, if it be only to avoid curious stories and suspicions. This Nagle actually refused in his rough way, to let me upstairs."

"One can't have this sort of thing," said Mr. Gardiner, excitedly. "We must come to an understanding at once. There must be no barring out the man's relations. Master Nagle—I mean Braham Nagle—will find himself in the wrong box if he tries any of those tricks."

"I am delighted to hear you say that," said Lady Duke, pressing his wrist warmly. "You know he is very bad, and, I hear, his mind is wandering, and all that. You see, with this party about him, they could concoct anything they pleased—and that doctor will back them up. It was Nagle sent for him, you know."

"Oh, yes," said Will Gardiner, now quite unreserved. "I suspected my lad long ago. It's been planned very cleverly, and as if they saw what was coming."

"I'll tell you what," said Lady Duke, mysteriously; "for the sake of this poor sick creature something must be done at once; and a trustworthy person, who can be depended on, placed about him. I have brought a faithful woman who nursed all our family, and whom I always send for when my husband is ill. She is waiting in the hall."

Will Gardiner's mouth took a sour expression. "I saw her," he said. "You have lost no time; but I ought to mention that Mrs. Gardiner has chosen some one who belongs to the place, who is more at home here. She attended her in her illness."

"How thoughtful of her! So like her, always thinks of everything! After all, it is not much matter, provided it be a safe person. And she was ill? Dear me! not a fever, I hope?"

"No, her confinement," said Mr. Gardiner, readily.

"Ah, never do!" she answered, with a sorrowful smile; "it requires, you know, quite a different training. Ah! here they come! now we shall know!"

Mr. Nagle was ushering in the great London doctor, and led him to a desk where he was to write prescriptions, Doctor Spooner following deferentially. Lady Duke flew over to Mr. Nagle, and caught his wrist, her favorite confidential mode.

"Well, how is he? Any danger? What does the doctor say?"

Mr. Nagle's head was in a sort of azure empyrean, while the rest of his person moved in the fogs of earth. He answered brusquely:

"My good madam, we can't attend to you now. I must really beg—— Oh, Gardiner! you there?"

"Well, what's the news?" said that gentleman, in his natural voice—a loud one.

"Oh, hush! hush!" said the other, reproachfully, and pointing to the ceiling. "We can't have this room full of people in this way. It disturbs and excites——"

"Here, what do you mean, Nagle?" answered Will Gardiner. "Do you want to turn us out, the man's blood relations? I can tell you there'll be a disturbance if you do."

Mr. Nagle got red. "I can't talk to you now. It's really indecent, a discussion of this kind."

Lady Duke had seized the opportunity of this discussion to approach the doctor.

"I am Lady Duke, Sir Fust," she said. "Let me introduce myself. A near relative of your poor patient up-stairs. I want you to tell me," she added, drawing him over into her window, "all about it. Is it serious? Should he not have his relatives and women about him, to watch him, and tend him?"

The doctor bowed; he was a fashionable physician, and liked people of title.

"Most certainly," he said. "It is most desirable, and has a soothing effect. This gentleman, who takes such an interest in the case, is hardly suited. I have told him he must get a regular nurse."

"I have brought one," said Lady Duke, eagerly; "she is below at this moment. A most faithful creature—has attended us all. Sir James and my son—myself."

"Well, if she be qualified, I dare say she would be very suitable. I was thinking of a young lady whom Mr. Doughty mentioned—his mind is not very clear or steady now, but the name was Corinna, I

think—and Mr. Nagle tells me there was an attachment, or something of the kind. If so, her presence now would have a soothing effect."

"My dear Sir Fust," said the lady, drawing him further into the window, "you are not supposed to know the stories of this place; but it is my duty to tell you that this girl has a good deal to do with his illness. A most unfortunate business from the beginning—she treated him very badly—and I should fear that her presence——"

Mr. Nagle and the local doctor had now come up.

"I think," said the London doctor, "on the whole, that young lady of yours had better not come; it might agitate the patient, eh? Better leave it alone altogether."

"My dear Sir Fust, why it's my daughter—my own daughter. There's a long story about all this. The fact is——"

"The fact is, my good sir, I am here to speak the plain truth; and that is, that the gentleman up-stairs is in a very dangerous state. And I tell whoever are his relations, and have the duty of taking care of him, that he is not to be agitated. I merely state what ought to be done; and it is their concern whether it be carried out or not."

"Quite so," said Will Gardiner. "Lady Duke and I are his nearest blood relations. Mr. Nagle here is a comparative stranger, and no relation in the world. We can't stand on delicacy here, or be disputing about such matters; and I am sure Mr. Nagle will see he must submit to the directions of the physicians."

Braham Nagle turned pale. He was not prepared for this spirited attack. He had, indeed, all through his life, made but a poor show before resistance, and in his own profession had given way before pretenders more audacious than himself. But at this crisis he found an ally in Doctor Spooner, who said quietly:

"This is rather unfair towards Mr. Nagle, who has all through been the intimate and chosen friend of the patient. There are no designs such as have been insinuated here, nor any wish to interfere with the relations. But I can take on myself to say, that any such uncourteous dismissal of Mr. Nagle would be most improper, on the very ground that Sir Fust has stated. It would certainly agitate the patient. As the physician in charge of the case, I disapprove of it."

These words were delivered calmly, quietly, and with a grave authority, and

had due effect. Professional esprit du corps came to aid, and Sir Fust Harold at once rallied to his brother with a "Quite so. There must be no agitation. Things are going on very well as they are. Any discussions of this kind had best be adjourned until the convalescence—which we may hope for."

Mr. Nagle darted a half-defiant, half-scared look at his enemies; while Will Gardiner coloured and fumed. Lady Duke, however, was not routed.

"Just what I say," she exclaimed. "The one thing is to have our poor Doughty properly looked after and brought through. Where the life of a person we are interested in is at stake, there can be no standing on delicacy and that sort of thing. The nurse is here, in the very house."

"I shall take care of that," said Doctor Spooner, quietly. "I have a proper person selected, whom I can answer for professionally. She will be here this afternoon. It is very good of Lady Duke to take so much trouble, and it does her honour; but I must take on myself the responsibility, as we cannot run any risks in such a case. She is already engaged, and will be here this evening."

"Quite proper," said the London doctor, "and only the regular course."

Lady Duke, as well as Mr. Gardiner, looked a little confounded at this method of settling the matter, but remained silent. There was, indeed, nothing more to be said. The physician took his leave and went to the inn to lunch, promising to see the patient again before he returned to town. As he retired more of "the relations" met him on the stairs. The Reverend Mr. Gardiner and his lady had discussed the matter in a dialogue, in spirit much the same as that which had taken place between the other Mr. Gardiner and his wife, and had decided on this visit. Mrs. Gardiner carried something in her hand, and the two had sympathising faces. Lady Duke and Will Gardiner looked at them significantly; but the new arrivals were wholly unfitted for taking part in such a struggle, having neither the boldness nor the shiftiness necessary to hold their ground, or push their advance.

"What, you here?" said Will, a little scoffingly.

"Yes," said his brother; "it is dreadful, isn't it, and so sudden too. He dined with us only so lately. He must have had it on him then."

"It is believed that he got it at your house," said Will. "It was a raw night, recollect. I dare say if you had left him quietly at home he'd have been all right now. What have you got there, Jemima?"

"We made up a little calf's-foot jelly," said she; "it is the best thing he could take. I know it saved one of the children. If we could get him to take it——"

Will Gardiner gave a meaning smile. "Dear me, how thoughtful. I say, Spooner, do you think you can admit this lady with her pot of calf's-foot jelly? she wishes to administer it herself."

"All those sort of things are idle at the present stage. You may depend on it, I shall take care that he has everything necessary. It is very thoughtful, no doubt."

"But surely," said the reverend gentleman, with some hesitation, "as his clergyman, he being one of my own flock, really I have a right to look after his spiritual state. If his situation is so critical, it is a duty you know——"

"Utterly impossible," said the doctor. "I shall let no one see him for the present, except, of course, Mr. Nagle, who has been here from the beginning. I take it all on myself, as his medical adviser."

"Then," said Will Gardiner, a little maliciously, "you can take back the calf's-foot, and give it to one of the children."

"You need not direct me as to that," said his brother, tartly; "but I begin to understand what is going on here. I assure you no trickery will do. Doughty is our relation as well as yours."

"Nobody denies that. What on earth do you mean by talking in that style? Who wants any trickery, as you call it? My dear friend, if you were to turn out as many pots of calf's-foot as Crosse and Blackwell, and send them here in vans, it wouldn't do."

Alas! for the brothers, with their arms encircling each other! Alas! for the Sunday walks, which were to be from this time mere things of the past!

The first skirmish round the prostrate Doughty saw the affectionate Gardiners in fierce conflict, and all was changed.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 223. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER XLIX. ALONE IN THE WORLD.

SIR HARRY did not find Mr. Forrester at home; the solicitor was at a consultation in the Temple. Thither drove the baronet, who was impetuous in most things, and intolerant of delay where an object lay near his heart.

Up to the counsel's chambers in the Temple mounted Sir Harry Rokestone.

He hammered his double-knock at the door as peremptorily as he would have done at his own hall-door.

Mr. Forrester afforded him just half a minute; and they parted good friends, having made an appointment for the purpose of talking over poor mamma's affairs, and considering what was best to be done.

Sir Harry strode, with the careless step of a mountaineer, along the front of the buildings, till he reached the entrance to which, in answer to a sudden inquiry, Mr. Forrester had directed him.

Up the stairs he marched, and stopped at the door of the chambers occupied by Mr. Carmel. There he knocked again as stoutly as before.

The door was opened by Edwin Carmel himself.

"Is Mr. Carmel here?" inquired the old man.

"I am Mr. Carmel," answered he.

"And I am Sir Harry Rokestone," said the baronet. "I found a letter from you this morning; it had been lying at my house unopened for some time," said the baronet.

Mr. Carmel invited him to come in.

There were candles lighted, for it was by

this time nearly dark; he placed a chair for his visitor: they were alone.

Sir Harry Rokestone seated himself, and began:

"There was no need, sir, of apology for your letter; intervention on behalf of two helpless and suffering ladies was honourable to you; but I had also heard some particulars from their own professional man of business; that, however, you could not have known. I have called to tell you that I quite understand the case. So much for your letter. But, sir, I have been informed that you are a Jesuit."

"I am a Catholic priest, sir."

"Well, sir, I won't press the point; but the ruin of that family has been brought about, so far as I can learn, by gentlemen of that order. They got about that poor foolish creature, Lady Lorrimer; and, by cajoleries and terror, they got hold of every sixpence of her fortune, which, according to all that's right and kind in nature, should have gone to her nearest kindred."

Sir Harry's eyes were fixed on him, as if he expected an answer.

"Lady Lorrimer did, I suppose, what pleased her best in her will," said the young man, coldly; "Mrs. Ware had expectations, I believe, which have been, you say, disappointed."

"And do you mean to tell me that you don't know that fact for certain?" said the old gentleman, growing hot.

"I'm not certain of anything of which I have no proof, Sir Harry," answered Mr. Carmel. "If I were a Jesuit, and your statement were a just one, still I should know no more about the facts than I do now; for it would not be competent for me to inquire into the proceedings of my superiors in the order. It is enough

for me to say that I know nothing of any such influence exerted by any human being upon Lady Lorrimer; and I need scarcely add that I have never, by word or act, endeavoured ever so slightly to influence Lady Lorrimer's dealings with her property! Your ear, sir, has been abused by slander."

"By Jea! Here's modesty!" said Sir Harry, exploding in a gruff laugh of scorn, and standing up. "What a pack o' gaumless gannets you must take us for! Look-ye, now, young sir. I have my own opinion about all that. And tell your superiors, as you call them, they'll never get a plack of old Harry Rokestone's money, while hand and seal can bind, and law's law; and if I catch a priest in my house, ye may swear he'll get out of it quicker than he came in. I'd thank you more for your letter, sir, if I was a little more sure of the motive; and now I've said my say, and I wish ye good evening."

With a fierce smile, the old man looked at him steadily for a few seconds, and then turning abruptly, left the room and shut the door, with a firm clap, after him.

That was, to me, an anxious night.

Mamma continued ill; I had written rather a wild note for our doctor; but he did not come for many hours.

He did not say much; he wrote a prescription, and gave some directions; he was serious and reserved, which, in a physician, means alarm.

In answer to my flurried inquiries, as I went down-stairs by his side, he said:

"I told you, you recollect, that it is a capricious kind of thing; I hope she may be better when I look in in the morning; the nature of it is, that it may end at any time, with very little warning; but with caution, she may live a year, or possibly two years. I've known cases, as discouraging as hers, where life has been prolonged for three years."

Next morning came, and I thought mamma much better. I told her all that was cheery in the doctor's opinion, and amused her with plans for our future. But the hour was drawing near when doctors' opinions, and friends' hopes, and flatteries, and the kindly illusions of plans looking pleasantly into indefinite future, were to be swallowed in the tremendous event.

About half an hour before our kind doctor's call, mamma's faintness returned. I now began, and not an hour too soon, to despair. The medicine he had ordered the

day before, to support her in these paroxysms, had lost its power.

Mamma had been for a time in the drawing-room; but having had a long fainting-fit there, I persuaded her, so soon as she was a little recovered, to return to her bed.

I find it difficult, I may say, indeed, impossible, to reduce the occurrences of this day to order. The picture is not, indeed, so chaotic as my recollection of the times and events that attended my darling Nelly's death. The shock, in that case, had affected my mind. But I do not believe that any one retains a perfectly arranged recollection of the flurried and startling scenes that wind up our hopes in the dread catastrophe. I never met a person yet who could have told the story of such a day with perfect accuracy and order.

I don't know what o'clock it was when the doctor came. There is something of the character of sternness in the brief questions, the low tone, and the silent inspection, that mark his last visit to the sick-room. What is more terrible than the avowed helplessness that follows, and his evident acquiescence in the inevitable?

"Don't go. Oh, don't go yet, wait till I come back, only a few minutes; there might be a change, and something might be done."

I entreated; I was going up to mamma's room; I had come down with him to the drawing-room.

"Well, my dear, I'll wait." He looked at his watch. "I'll remain with you for ten minutes."

I suppose I looked very miserable, for I saw a great compassion in his face. He was very good-natured, and he added, placing his hand upon my arm, and looking gently in my face, "But, my poor child, you must not flatter yourself with hopes for I have none—there are none."

But what so headstrong and so persistent as hope! Terrible must be that place where it never comes.

I had scarcely left the drawing-room when Sir Harry Rokestone, of the kindly change in whom I had spoken to our good doctor, knocked at the hall-door.

Our rustic maid, Anne Owen, who was crying, let him in, and told him the sudden news; he laid his hand against the door-post and grew pale. He did not say a word for while you might count twenty. Then he asked, "Is the doctor here?"

The girl led the way to the drawing-room. "Bad news, doctor?" said the tall

old man, in an agitated voice, as he entered, with his eyes fixed on Sir Jacob Lake. "My name is Rokestone, Sir Harry Rokestone. Tell me, is it so bad as the servant says. You have not given her up?"

The doctor shook his head, he advanced slowly a step or two to meet Sir Harry, and said, in a low tone:

"Mrs. Ware is dying; sinking very fast."

Sir Harry walked to the mantelpiece, and laid his hand on it, and stood there without moving. After a little he turned again, and came to Sir Jacob Lake.

"You London doctors—you're so hurried," he said, a little wildly, "from place to place. I think—I think—look, doctor; save her! save her, man!"—he caught the doctor's wrist in his hand—"and I'll make your fortune. Ye need never do an hour's work more. Man was never so rewarded, not for a queen."

The doctor looked very much offended; but, coarse as the speech was, it was delivered with a pathetic and simple vehemence that disarmed him.

"You mistake me, sir," he said. "I take a very deep interest in this case. I have known Mrs. Ware from the time when she came to live in London. I hope I do my duty in every case, but in this I have been particularly anxious, and I do assure you if—— What's that?"

It was, as Shakespeare says, "a cry of women," the sudden shrilly clamour of female voices heard through distant doors.

The doctor opened the door, and stood at the foot of the stairs.

"Ay, that's it," he said, shaking his head a little. "It's all over."

CHAPTER L. A PROTECTOR.

I WAS in mamma's room; I was holding up her head; old Rebecca and Anne Owen were at the bedside. My terrified eyes saw the doctor drawing near softly in the darkened room. I asked him some wild questions, and he answered gently, "No, dear; no, no."

The doctor took his stand at the bedside, and, with his hands behind his back, looked down at her face sadly.

Then he leaned over. He laid his hand gently on mamma's, put his fingers to her wrist, felt, also, for the beating of her heart, looked again at her face, and rose from his stooping posture with a little shake of the head and a sigh, looked in the still face once more for a few seconds, and, turning to me, said, tenderly:

"You had better come away, dear;

there's nothing more to be done. You must not distress yourself."

That last look of the physician at his patient, when he stands up, and becomes on a sudden no more than any other spectator, his office over, his command ended, is terrifying.

For two or three minutes I scarcely knew who was going or coming.

The doctor, who had just gone downstairs, returned with an earnest request from Sir Harry Rokestone that in an hour or so he might be permitted to come back and take a last look of mamma.

He did come back, but his heart failed him. He could not bear to see her now.

He went into the drawing-room, and, a few minutes later, Rebecca Torkill came into my room, where, by this time, I was crying alone, and said:

"Ye mustn't take on so, my darling; rouse yourself a bit. That old man, Sir Harry Rokestone, is down in the drawing-room in a bit of a taking, and he says he must see you before he goes."

"I can't see him, Rebecca," I said.

"But what am I to say to him?" said she.

"Simply that. Do tell him I can't go down or see anybody."

"But ain't it as well to go and have it over, miss? for, see you he will, I am sure of that; and I can't manage him."

"Does he seem angry," I said, "or only in grief? I dare say he is angry. Yesterday, when he was here, he never spoke one word to me; he took no notice of me whatever."

At another time an interview with Sir Harry Rokestone might have inspired many more nervous misgivings; as it was, I had only this: I knew that he had hated papa, and I, as my father's child, might well "stand within his danger," as the old phrase was. And the eccentric and violent old man, I thought, might, in the moment and agony of having lost for ever the object of an affection which my father had crossed, have sent for me, his child, simply to tell me that with my father's blood I had inherited his curse.

"I can't stay, miss, indeed. He was talking to himself, and stamping with his thick shoes on the floor a bit as he walked. But ain't it best to have done with him at once, if he ain't friendly, and not keep him here, coming and going? for, see you he will, sooner or later."

"I don't very much care. Perhaps you are right. Yes, I will go down and see

him," I said. "Go you down, Rebecca, and tell him that I am coming."

I had been lying on my bed, and required to adjust my hair, and dress a little.

As I came down-stairs, a few minutes later, I passed poor mamma's door; the key was turned in it. Was I walking in a dream? Mamma dead, and Sir Harry Rokestone waiting in the drawing-room to see me! I leaned against the wall, feeling faint for a minute.

As I approached the drawing-room door, which was open, I heard Rebecca's voice talking to him, and then the old man said, in a broken voice:

"Where's the child? Bring her here. I will see the bairn."

I was the "bairn" summoned to his presence. This broad north-country dialect, the language, I suppose, of his early childhood, always returned to him in moments when his feelings were excited.

I entered the room, and he strode toward me.

"Ha! the lassie," he cried, gently. There was a little tremor in his deep voice; a pause followed, and he added vehemently, "By the God above us, I'll never forsake you."

He held me to his heart for some seconds without speaking.

"Gimma your hand. I love you for her sake," he said, and took my hand firmly and kindly in his, and he looked earnestly in my face for awhile in silence. "You're like her; but, oh! lassie, you'll never be the same; there'll never be another such as Mabel."

Tears, which he did not dry or conceal, trickled down his rugged cheeks.

He had been talking with Rebecca Tor-kill, and had made her tell him everything she could think of about mamma.

"Sit ye down here, lass," he said to me, having recovered his self-possession. "You are to come home wi' me, to Gouden Friars, or wherever else you like best. You shall have music and flowers, and books and dresses, and you shall have your maid to wait on you, like other young ladies, and you shall bring Rebecca with you. I'll do my best to be kind and helpful; and you'll be a blessing to a very lonely old man; and as I love you now for Mabel's sake, I'll come to love you after for your own."

I did not think his stern old face could look so gentle and sorrowful, and the voice, generally so loud and commanding, speak so tenderly. The light of that look was full of compassion and melancholy, and

indicated a finer nature than I had given the uncouth old man credit for.

He seemed pleased by what I said; he was doing, he felt, something for mamma in taking care of the child she had left so helpless.

Days were to pass before he could speak to me in a more business-like way upon his plans for my future life, and those were days of agitation and affliction, from which, even in memory, I turn away.

I am going to pass over some little time.

An interval of six weeks finds me in a lofty wainscoted room, with two stone-shafted windows, large and tall, in proportion, admitting scarcely light enough, however, to make it cheerful.

These windows are placed at the end of an oblong apartment, and the view they command is melancholy and imposing. I was looking through the sudden hollow of a mountain gorge, with a level of pasture between its craggy sides, upon a broad lake, nearly three hundred yards away, with a barrier of mountains rising bold and purple from its distant margin. A file of gigantic trees stretches from about midway down to the edge of the lake, and partakes of the sombre character of the scene. On the steeps at either side, in groups or singly, stand some dwarf oak and birch-trees, scattered and wild, very picturesque, but I think enhancing the melancholy of the view.

For me this spot, repulsive as it would have been to most young people, had a charm; not, indeed, that of a "happy valley," but the charm of seclusion, which to a wounded soul is above price.

Those who have suffered a great reverse will understand my horror of meeting the people whom I had once known, my recoil from recognition, and how welcome are the shadows and silence of the cloister, compared with the anguish of a comparative publicity.

Experience had early dissipated the illusions of youth, and taught me to listen to the whisperings of hope with cold suspicion. I had no trust in the future; my ghastly mischances had filled me with disgust and terror. My knowledge haunted me; I could not have learned it from the experience of another, though my instructor had come to me from the dead.

I was here, then, under no constraint, not the slightest. It was of my own free choice that I came, and remained here. Sir Harry Rokestone would have taken me anywhere I pleased.

Other people spoke of him differently; I can speak only of my own experience. Nothing could be more considerate and less selfish than his treatment of me, nothing more tender and parental. Kind as he was, however, I always felt a sort of awe in his presence. It was not, indeed, quite the awe that is founded on respect; he was old; in most relations stern; and his uneducated moral nature, impetuous and fierce, seemed capable of tragic things. It was not a playful nature with which the sympathies and spirit of a young person could at all coalesce.

Thormen Fell, at the north of the lake, that out-topped the rest, and shielded us from the wintry wind, rearing its solemn head in solitude, snowy, rocky, high in air, the first of the fells visible, the first to greet me, far off in the sunshine, with its dim welcome as I returned to Golden Friars. It was friendly, it was kindly, but always stood aloof and high, and was always associated in my mind with danger, isolation, and mystery. And I think my liking for Sir Harry Rokestone partook of my affection for Thormen Fell.

So, as you have no doubt surmised, I was harboured in the old baronet's feudal castle of Dorraclough. A stern, wild, melancholy residence, but one that suited wonderfully my present mood.

He was at home; another old gentleman, whose odd society I liked well, was very also at that time an inmate of the house. I will tell you more about him in my next chapter.

OLD EDINBURGH DOCTORS.

Not many years ago I was one of a sorrowful company that followed to the grave an old man—a very old man. He was a physician of note in the grey old metropolis of the north, and had been so for many years. Putting on his doctor's cap and gown when last century was coming to a close, he was in the fulness of his fame and practice when this century was very young. Living to a ripe old age, he had seen one after another of those who started on the race of life with him drop aside until he stood almost alone, the last representative of an age which has now begun to pass out of the recollection of living men. In his day he had fingered many pulses, and pocketed many guineas; moving silently in and out of sick men's chambers, his observing eye and iron memory retained

many quaint old anecdotes and illustrations of bygone times, which he never wearied of telling to us younger men, who used to gather around him at the jovial little parties to which, to the very close of his life, he delighted in inviting his junior professional brethren. He was one of the last links between this century and the last. When a boy he used to go to school with a lame, little lad—the son of an Edinburgh writer to the signet—called “Watty Scott,” and he was long years afterwards one of those who stood bareheaded at the inauguration of the monument which a grateful world had reared in his native city to his old schoolfellow—the famous “magician of the north.”

His father used to talk to him, in awe and veneration, of “Bossy,” and the “admirable Doctor Johnson,” and of the time when these two luminaries did Edinburgh the honour to shed their refulgence on it in the course of their ever famous Scottish journey; my friend could himself well remember another boy pointing out a rather dissipated-looking man turning down a high street close, and exclaiming, “Eh! There's Robie Burns gang to get his mornin',” and from the establishment into which he turned, my friend had little doubt but that the object of the early morning walk of the national bard was connected with a dram—a fatal habit even then beginning to grow upon him. Naturally many of my old friend's illustrative stories related to members of his own profession; but the caste of doctors has always been a very important one in Edinburgh. Mingling, owing to their calling, even more than clergymen or lawyers, among all classes of society, their manners were pretty much the manners of the people of the period. Many, however, of these anecdotes, unedited and unpublished, related to men very famous in their days, and whose works now form some of the most important contributions to the literature of their profession, and are accordingly interesting in a biographical light. Therefore, from amid the profusion of those which I have heard from his lips, I select a few relating to the great physicians and professors in the university, which during last, and the beginning of the present century, made Edinburgh so famous as a medical school.

The most famous surgeon in Edinburgh, towards the close of last century, was certainly Mr. Alexander Wood, Member of the Incorporation of Chirurgeons, or what is

now called the Royal College of Surgeons. In these good old times his contemporaries, and the mob who worshipped him, knew him by no other name than Lang Sandy Wood (or "Wud" as it was pronounced). In the history of fashionable attire he deserves remembrance as the last man in Edinburgh who wore a cocked-hat and sword as a part of his ordinary dress, and the first who was known to carry an umbrella. After he laid aside his sword, the umbrella was his constant accompaniment, and Kay, in his Edinburgh portraits (No. lxviii.), has so portrayed him, in the guise in which his tall form was so familiar to the Edinburgh people seventy or eighty years ago. It is generally supposed that he was induced to discontinue the wearing of the cocked-hat and sword by an unfortunate little accident that very nearly happened to him. At that time—about 1792—the then lord provost, or chief magistrate of the city, a Mr. Stirling, was very unpopular with the lower classes of society, and one dark night, as Sandy was proceeding over the North Bridge on some errand of mercy, he was met by an infuriated mob proceeding from the "closes" of the old town to burn the provost's house in revenge for some supposed wrong inflicted by that functionary. Catching sight of an old gentleman in a cocked-hat and sword, they instantly concluded that this must be the provost, these two articles of dress being then part of the ordinary official attire of the Edinburgh chief magistrate. Then arose the cry of, "Throw him over the bridge"—a suggestion no sooner made than it was attempted to be carried into execution. The tall old surgeon was in mortal terror, and had barely time to gasp out just as he was carried to the parapet of the bridge, "Gude folk, I'm no the provost. Carry me to a lamp-post, and ye'll see I'm Lang Sandy Wood!" With considerable doubt whether or not the obnoxious magistrate was not trying to save his life by trading on the popularity of Sandy, they carried him to one of the dim oil-lamps with which the city was then lit, and, after scanning his face closely, satisfied themselves of the truth of their victim's assertion. Then came a revulsion of feeling, and amid shouts of applause the popular surgeon was carried home to his residence on the shoulders of the mob. It was not only his supreme skill, but his kindness of heart and his eccentricity that won the popular favour. The latter peculiarity is

one which has caused his name to even now be traditionally remembered in Edinburgh. All his life long this peculiarity distinguished him. When proposing to his future wife's father for his daughter, the old gentleman took a pinch of snuff and said, "Weel, Sandy, lad, I've naething again' ye, but what have ye to support a wife on?" Truly a most pertinent question, considering that in those days his income was of the most limited description. Sandy's reply was to pull a case of lancets out of his pocket with the remark, "These!" It was nothing uncommon for him, while about to perform an operation, to pull a pistol out of his pocket and threaten to shoot the servants through the head if they attempted to make the least noise. This precaution was more necessary than now, when we remember that this was before the days of chloroform. He had the most eccentric ways of curing people. One of his patients, the Honourable Mrs. —, took it into her head that she was a hen, and that her mission in life was to hatch eggs. So firmly did this delusion take possession of her mind, that by-and-bye she found it impossible to rise off her seat, lest the eggs should get cold. Sandy encouraged her mania, and requested that he might have the pleasure of taking a "dish of tea" with her that evening, and that she would have the very best china on the table. She cordially agreed to this, and when her guest arrived in the evening he found the tea-tray covered with some very valuable crockery, which did not belie its name, for it had really been imported from China by a relative of the lady, an East India nabob. The surgeon made a few remarks about the closeness of the room, asked permission to raise the window, and then watching an opportunity when the hostess's eye was on him, he seized the trayful of fragile ware and feigned to throw them out of the window. The lady screamed, and forgetful in her fright of her supposed inability to rise, she rushed from her seat to arrest the arm of the Vandal. The task was not a hard one, for the eccentric old surgeon laughed as he replaced the tray on the table, and escorted his patient to her seat. The spell had been broken, and nothing more was ever heard of the egg-hatching mania.

Another lady patient of his had a tumour in her throat, which threatened her death if it did not burst. She entirely lost her voice, and all his efforts to reach the seat of the malady were unavailing. As a last resort, he quietly placed the poker in the

fire, and after in vain attempting to get his patient to scream, so as to burst the tumour, he asked her to open her mouth, and then, seizing the now red-hot poker, he made a rush with it to her throat. The result was a yell of terror from the thoroughly frightened patient, which effected what he had long desired—the breaking of the tumour, and her recovery. The same Provost Stirling whom we have already mentioned as having been once mistaken for Sandy, was a familiar acquaintance of our eccentric surgeon, and one day followed him along the street, playfully bantering him for taking a guinea for advice which had never done him any good. Sandy's remark was quite to the purpose. "If ye follow me, provost, for the next twa days as ye have done this last twa hours, I'll warrant that we'll hear nae mair o' your indigestion." Few parties in Edinburgh in those days were supposed to be complete without the presence of this eccentric surgeon, though certainly, if all stories were true, it was not on account of any particular affability on his part to the foibles of the hostess. "Routs" (whatever these were) were just then beginning to be introduced into Edinburgh society, and wretchedly formal things they seem to have been. When Sandy assisted at the first he found all the people sitting demurely with their backs to the wall, not saying much, and much wondering in their minds what was coming next. This went on for some time, until everybody was getting tired of it, when the silence was broken by the broad Doric voice of Lang Sandy Wood inquiring of the hostess, "Madam, would you be kind eneuch to tell us what ye have brought us a' here to dae?" This was a signal for the ice to break up, and the old pleasant life of an Edinburgh party to commence. Stately, bag-wigged, black-silk-stockinged, and gold-headed-caned was the fashionable doctor at that time, and Edinburgh was then the stronghold of the medical profession. Once a week it became absolutely necessary for the face which had been kept in unnatural primness to unbend. The Athletic Club, composed of the Edinburgh doctors, afforded this outlet. Their field meetings were held on Leith Links, a distance of some two miles from Edinburgh. The seaport of Leith is now almost a part of Edinburgh, being united to it by Leith Walk, one long busy street. But in the beginning of this century it was different. Green fields, with a scattered farm-house or villa here and there, were the only signs of

habitation, and sometimes a snow-storm would stop all communication with Edinburgh for two or three days. To this rural retreat the old and young Edinburgh doctors, on Saturday afternoon, leaving their patients to take care of themselves, rode down, passing the afternoon in the athletic exercises of running, leaping, and swimming from the adjoining pier; the day winding up with a good dinner, and no stint of claret. It was on one of these athletic Saturdays that a famous feat of Sandy Wood was accomplished. Competing for the club medal, he struck out from the pier head, and was soon lost in a dense fog, which covered the sea. The opportunity was too good to be lost, and accordingly, on the medal which he won on the occasion, it is gravely recorded that "Mr. Alexander Wood, Fellow of the Royal College of Chirurgeons, swam out of sight of land!" I believe that the medal is still in existence. Such was the celebrated Lang Sandy Wood, whom Sir Walter Scott celebrates in *Guy Mannering* in a speech, wherein Meg Merrilies refers to him and his goat: and in *Blackwood's Magazine* of the date of his death, there are some verses on him, commencing:

Oh! for an hour with him who knew no feud,
The octogenarian chief, kind old Sandy Wood.

Quite a different kind of personage was the well-known Professor James Gregory, perhaps the most celebrated physician of his day, but who, in popular estimation, is dolefully remembered as the inventor of a nauseous compound known as Gregory's Mixture. He was a tall and very handsome man, and stately and grave in all his manners, but, withal, with a touch of Scotch humour in him. One evening, walking home from the university, he came upon a street row or bicker, a sort of town-and-gown riot very common in those days. Observing a boy systematically engaged in breaking windows, he seized him, and inquired, in the sternest voice, what he did that for.

"Oh," was the reply, "my master's a glazier, and I'm trying to help business."

"Indeed. Very proper; very proper, my boy," Doctor Gregory answered, and, as he proceeded to maul him well with his cane, "you see I must follow your example. I'm a doctor, and must help business a little." And with that, he gave a few finishing whacks to the witty youth, and went off, chuckling at having turned

the tables on the glazier's apprentice. Doctor Gregory was a volunteer, one of the old sort, but made a poor soldier indeed. He was the *bête noire* of the drill sergeant, who declared that he would rather drill ten clowns than one philosopher. The learned professor was always asking the why and wherefore of everything, until the sergeant lost all patience, and begged to inform Professor Gregory that the "first duty of a soldier was to hold his tongue," a slight variation on the customary axiom in reference to this point, but one, no doubt, perfectly suitable to the circumstances of the case.

The period of which I write was rather a rough old time, on the whole, and people were much in the habit of taking the law into their own hands. It was a day of duels and street fights, and it would have been singular if the doctors had escaped the contagion, especially when we remember that the odium medicum has never been wanting in Scotland, where, indeed, one professor in the medical faculty of the University of Edinburgh is reported to have gone about for weeks with a bad leg, simply because he couldn't make up his mind to consult the only surgeon who was able and willing to operate for his disease—a fellow-professor.

Accordingly Edinburgh laughed heartily, but was not at all scandalised, when one famous university professor kicked another famous professor, in the same faculty, down before him from near the North Bridge to where the Register House now stands. The *casus belli* was simple, but, as reported, most irritating. The offending professor was lecturing to his class one morning, and happened to say that baldness was no sign of age. "In fact, gentlemen," said the suave professor, "it's no sign at all, nor the converse. I was called in very early yesterday morning to see the wife of a distinguished colleague, a lady whose raven locks have long been the pride of rout and ball. It was early in the morning, and I caught the lady in *deshabille*, and, would you believe it, the raven locks were all fudge, and the lady was as bald as the palm of my hand." The professor said nothing more, but no sooner was his lecture ended than the students casually inquired of the coachman whom the professor was called to see early yesterday morning. The coachman, innocently enough, answered, "Oh, Mrs. Professor —." This was enough, and so, before four-and-twenty hours went round, the story came to Pro-

fessor A. that Professor B. had said, in his class, that Mrs. Professor A. wore a wig. For two days they did not meet, and when they did the offender was punished in the ignominious manner described.

Another professor of those days (one whom I can well remember myself, but as he has been dead but a few years, he may be nameless) was noted for his miserly habits, though, in reality, he was a rich man—the proprietor of several ancestral estates. He once observed a Highland student—proverbially a poor set—about to pick up a penny in the college quad, but just as he was about to pick it up, the learned professor gave him a push, which sent the poor fellow right over, when Doctor — coolly pocketed the coin and walked on amid the laughter of a crowd of students, who were watching the scene. He did not always stick at trifles. Going down the crowded street he saw a street boy pick up a shilling. Instantly the professor chucked it out of the lad's hand, and then holding it between his thumb and forefinger, with his gold-headed cane in the other, carefully guarding it, he read out to the whimpering boy a long lecture on honesty being the best policy; how the "coin" was not his; how it might belong to some poor man whose family might be suffering for the want of that coin, and so on, concluding by pocketing the shilling, and charging the finder that "if ever he heard of anybody having lost that shilling, to say that Professor — had got it. Everybody knows me. It is quite safe. Honesty, my lad, is always the best policy. Remember that, and read your catechism well." On one occasion he was called in in consultation with Professor Gregory about a patient of his who happened to be a student of medicine. The day previously, however, Doctor Gregory had called alone, and on going away was offered the customary guinea. This the stately physician firmly refused; he never took fees from students. The patient replied that Professor — did. Immediately Gregory's face brightened up. "I will be here to-morrow in consultation with him. Be good enough to offer me a fee before him, sir." To-morrow came, and the student did as he had been requested. "What is that, sir?" the professor answered, looking at the proffered guinea: "A fee, sir! Do you mean to insult me, sir? What do you take us to be—cannibals? Do we live on one another? No, sir. The man who could take a fee from a student of his own profession ought

to be kicked — kicked, sir, out of the faculty! Good morning!" and with that the celebrated physician walked to the door in well-affected displeasure. Next day, to the astonishment of the patient, Professor — sent a packet with all the fees returned. It is said that he once took a bag of potatoes for a fee, and ever after boasted of his generosity in the matter: "The man was a poor man, sir. We must be liberal, sir. Our Master enjoins it on us, and it is recommended in a fine passage in the admirable aphorisms of Hippocrates. The man had no money, sir, so I had to deal gently with him, and take what he had; though, as a rule—as a rule—I prefer the modern to the ancient exchange, pecunia instead of pecus. Hah! hah!" He is said to have been the hero of the following story: A beggar seeing him pick up a farthing begged to get it. "Na, na, puir body," was the firm refusal; "fin' a fardin' for yersel'!" This is not true, however, though the story loses nothing in the exchange of dramatis personæ. Its real hero was a certain noble earl.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

COLONEL NATHANIEL J. COOLING—better known as Cool Nat—of Coolington, San Joaquin County, in the state of California, was a fellow-passenger of mine on that well-known Transatlantic steamship, the Mongolia, famous alike for the rapidity of her ocean voyages, the absence of napkins at meal times, and the bluff heartiness of her excellent commander. As is, or rather was, invariably the case, the Mongolia had received a very good "send off," the friends of the passengers mustering in great strength, and accompanying their hearty wishes for a swift passage, quick return, and a "good time" generally, with a brisk consumption of the sparkling fluid which flows with such unfailing liberality on the other side of the Atlantic. Busy as I was in pledging my numerous friends, I yet found a moment to steal a glance at my room-mate—the traveller who occupied the one other berth in my state room—and, exchanging cards with him over a glass of champagne, was charmed to find my domiciliary partner for the next eight days the celebrated, or notorious, person whose name I have mentioned. Dim rumours of daring deeds done, or

as some hypercritical purists would rather say, perpetrated during the early days of the Golden States, had reached my ears from time to time, and with many of these the name of Nat Cooling was associated. Of the origin of this great man but little was known. Those who loved him best and obeyed that excellent law, "Speak well of the rich," declared that his youth had been passed in the lucrative business of importing "black-birds," in other words, in the slave trade, while those who were actuated by higher principles, that is, hated or envied the successful speculator, declared that a short but brilliant career of piracy had laid the foundation of his great fortune. All that was certainly known was that the colonel turned up in California during the first symptoms of the gold fever, and that his speculations in mining and other operations had been attended with solid success. Where he was "raised" remained a mystery, for the colonel, although very communicative on all subjects relating to his residence in California, maintained a severe reticence as to his happy boyhood and probably stormy youth. Neither his appearance nor his speech betrayed his supposed nautical antecedents, nor did his outline betray the numerous angles that the American physique is often credited withal. He was a plump, broad-shouldered man, the said broad shoulders being surmounted by a large bullet-head covered with a close-cut crop of stiff black hair. His face, with the exception of the upper lip, was clean-shaven, and his general expression was one of frank bonhomie. There were moments, however, when a singular expression flashed from his fine dark eye, and on these rare occasions it was not difficult for persons of an imaginative turn of mind to conjure up a scene in the summer seas of the Indian Archipelago with a scuttled ship slowly settling down in the dark blue water, and a rakish-looking craft almost hull down upon the horizon.

Colonel Cooling rejoiced in a velvet coat and a loose necktie of sanguine hue, but it was impossible to enjoy his society for any length of time without observing the immense diamond solitaire which adorned his large, but well-shaped, hand. This was not merely a large diamond, but a brilliant such as is rarely seen. It threw out flashes like a lime-light, and blazed with almost intolerable radiance. One splendid summer afternoon, as the Mongolia was doing her best to make short work of the Atlantic,

the colonel caught my eye fixed in admiration on his magnificent jewel, and launched at once into the following story:

"I guess, neighbour, you air takin' advantage of the fine weather to kinder photograph my diamond. It's worth the trouble, yes, sirrr! Not only for the valley of the stone, but for the high old time I had in gettin' it. You see I ain't a New Yorker, and never set eyes on the Empire City till a few weeks ago, when I kim around from Frisco to make a Eurōpian tower. In Californy we air heavy on gold, that's a fact, but we don't pan out much on diamonds, though they air mighty useful goods when a citizen finds things pretty well petered out in his old diggins, and wants to vamoose the ranch, and make tracks for a new placer. But no sooner had I landed, and got well fixed at the New York hotel, than, making a bee-line for the bar, I found all the folks run diamond mad. In most settlements I am acquainted with, the talk runs mostly on dollars, but in the big city I heard of nothing but diamonds. It seems that some old don married a pretty young gal some little time ago, and that the show of jewels at the diamond weddin' had set everybody stark starin' mad on brilliants. Every boy was braggin' on his diamonds, and some of 'em seemed to hold a full hand. Wal, after my third cocktail, I lit a fresh cigar, and began to feel that the diamond fever was kinder ketchin', and said I to myself, 'Nat Cooling, you never was a one-horse person nor a cuss as would take a back seat anywheres. If you air goin' to pan out on diamonds you must do it heavy.'

"Bein' on such uncommon good terms with myself, I took another drink, and then fell talkin' diamonds with a very elegantly-dressed gentleman, who gave me a lot of points on the subject. After a few more cocktails I told my new friend that I must get a diamond, but that it must be the biggest in New York. The gentleman wore a handsome stone himself, which he said was as good as he could pay for, but remarked that he thought he knew where to find an A 1 brilliant, in fact, the ayewunness stone in the world. I laugh, I do, when I think how anxious I was to see it, and how much I felt indebted to the young gentleman when he consented to mention my desire for the biggest diamond in New York to his friend. He told me that he did not think his friend would sell. In fact, he was pretty sure he wouldn't, but that I might have a sight of the stone

if I would breakfast with him at Delmonico's at twelve o'clock next day.

"This looked all right; and the next morning I was punctoal to my appointment, was introduced to my friend's friend — also an elegant gentleman — and sat down to the very best breakfast I had ever seen. I didn't, however, eat much more than a three-year-old b'ar, my mind was so took up with the diamond. Nothin' that I had ever seen in the sparkling way was a circumstance to it. Long before we got to the coffee and cigars I made a resolution to have that diamond. But when I led up to the subject the owner said that no money would induce him to part with a gem which had been given to him by his deceased mother on her death-bed. I felt kinder streaked at this, and wondered why boys who never care what their parents say when livin' should pay so much attention to their wishes when dead. However, the party broke up, and I invited my new friends to dine with me on the morrow. But I had diamond on the brain, could neither sleep nor drink, and actooally lost a big pile of dollars at poker through trying for a straight flush in diamonds. At our next meeting I noticed that the proprietor of the diamond looked discouraged about somethin', and told him what a bad time I had had at poker.

"'Ah!' said he, 'I am the most unlucky man in the world. Last night I lost ten thousand dollars at faro, coppering the jack. He won nineteen times running, and left me dead broke with nary red in my pocket.'

"Now, thought I, is my opportunity, so, after sympathisin' with him, I raked up the diamond subject agin. He did not like the idee at all at first, and kicked and cavorted like a vicious mustang, but at last, reflectin' that his debts of honour must be met, he caved in and parted with the diamond, after kissin' it agin and agin, with tears in his eyes, for ten thousand dollars cash, on my promising that if ever I should want to part with the stone, I would give him the option of repurchasing it at the same price, addin' seven per cent interest for the time I had laid out of my money. I must own that I felt pretty hunky over my bargain, and, promising myself great pleasure in New York and in Europe out of my big diamond, got pretty high, and proposed a game of euchre to my companions, just to while away the time. I have played all sorts of games in my time in all sorts of company, but that game of euchre was a

caution. It seemed square enough even to me, but the cards certainly ran agin me in the queerest way. So, after losing quite a pile, I thought it time to give over, and went to bed, thinkin' that, after all, my diamond was some consolation. But when, next morning, my friends did not drop in to breakfast, as they promised, I began to feel myself weakenin' on the business altogether, and made tracks for a great lapidary down town. After examinin' the gem, he told me coolly that it was about the best bogus diamond he had ever seen, but that a sham it was, and no mistake. You, sir, may imagine my feelin's, not so much at losing ten thousand dollars on the diamond, and a heap at play, as at the thought that I, Cool Nat, of San Joaquin, had been gobbled by a couple of New York dead-beats. I guess my language was pretty heavy when, just as I had cussed all the wool off of my new overcoat, an idee knocked up agin my brain and struck in at once. I inquired where the greatest jeweller and diamond merchant in the city kept, and after showing him my bogus gem, and swearing him to secrecy, asked if he could find me a real diamond like it.

"He told me he would do his level best to match it, and did so within three hours, charging me twelve thousand dollars for the stone. I then had it set in the ring in the place of my bogus one, and, putting Colonel Bogus in my pocket, walked into the bar of my hotel. As I had judged, there was more than two in the little speculation I had suffered from. My friend and his friend had cleared out, but I smelt powder when I heard the talk run upon the number of sham diamonds worn. 'Yes, sir,' said one young blood, dressed up like a barber's block; 'I guess them very big stones is mostly bogus,' casting at the same time a snaky look at my ring. I went on taking my bitters quite silent, and seemed kinder wrapped up in my ring. But they wouldn't let me alone, and presently got up a bet among themselves about their rings, and pitched upon me as umpire, for said one of 'em, 'Guess that strange gentleman as wears the Kohinoor ought to understand the subject.'

"I own I felt very like drawing my six-shooter, and clearing out the crowd, but I kept my temper, and said, 'Gentlemen, I don't understand small potatoes. Them little bits o' things may or not be genuine; but if you want to brag on diamonds I guess I'll take the pool.' At this they kinder sniggered, and asked

to look at my ring. I let them look as long as they liked, but kept the ring on my finger. At last one of them said, 'That stone must have come pretty high, I judge.' 'Yes, sir,' said I; 'ten thousand dollars cash.' At these words they sniggered agin. So I, puttin' on that I was riled, rounded on 'em sharp: 'I don't know, gentlemen, what you see to laugh at.' Then the gracefulest and politest cuss in the party says, quite solemn-like, 'I fear it is no laughin' matter for you, sir. I guess you air a stranger, and I suspect some rascals in the city here have stuck you with a imitation stone.' At this I pretended to rile right up, and swore that I bought the ring of a perfect gentleman, and had had no end of trouble to buy it at all. The polite man stiffened up his back at that, made some remarks on gentility in general, and wound up by offering to bet a thousand dollars that my diamond was bogus, to put up the money right away, and leave the matter to be decided by any jeweller named by the proprietor of the hotel.

"Then I felt that I had struck a lode, and turning round sharply, says, 'Looker here, sir; bets of a thousand dollars is good enough for a small game, but when my word is questioned, and my property is run down, I put down my whole pile, and I will back my diamond with my bottom dollar.' They kept their faces very well, but I could see their eyes glisten, and knew that I had 'em safe. One said 'he couldn't put up much just then, but he could find eight thousand in half an hour, and would stake it with pleasure agin mine.' Then another struck in, and thought as 'I didn't look satisfied with such a little bet, he would back his friend's opinion for five thousand,' and as I still kept on sayin' I was not goin' to show my diamond except for a bet of twenty thousand dollars, they scraped up about eighteen thousand among them. I covered the money, and handed it over, with the ring and a written memorandum, to the proprietor. A lapidary was named, called in, and decided at once that the diamond was genuine. Quite a considerable scene took place, and the swindlers insisted on callin' in another witness, and I nearly busted myself with laughin' when they named the very man I bought the stone of. When he saw the stone, his face was a study; but he never let-on that he had seen it before, and said only that it was perhaps 'the finest diamond he had ever seen in a ring,' bowed to the company.

and walked off. To do my rascals justice, they showed grit, drank the champagne I treated them to, and walked off coolly enough. But the best part of the joke is to come.

"The story of my big bet somehow got around, and all sorts of versions got into the papers. I was interviewed pretty heavily by reporters, and Colonel Nathaniel J. Cooling, of San Joaquin, was credited with owning the biggest diamond ring in New York, when who should walk into the hotel but my original friend and his friend. The cusses evidently believed that by some unheard-of chance they had purchased a real instead of a bogus diamond, and they were no doubt raging in their innards to think that they hadn't sold me in the first instance, and had put the gang in the hole for eighteen thousand dollars. But the stone was now celebrated, and they began tryin' to work on me to let 'em have it back for ten thousand dollars, as I had made such a good speculation in bets. The original proprietor said he was in funds agin, and couldn't sleep for thinkin' of his mother's ring. Of course he wanted it back to sell at a big profit, and recoup the gang a bit. I declined to sell, and kept him off and on till I was ready to start, and told him I must wear the ring till I was aboard ship, when, if he would pay down the money in gold, he could have his ring agin. You guess what I did? No? Why the day before we sailed I had the real diamond set in the ring you see on my hand, and Colonel Bogus put back into the old setting. My friends came on board, paid the money in gold, stranger — nary shin-plasters — examined the ring and the same old sham diamond they sold me, and went off as happy as coyotes round a dead mule. I wonder how they like the deal now! As far as I can figure it, I take about eighteen thousand by the spec—two-thirds in diamond, and the rest in gold. Our glorious Golden State is, I guess, the place to cut your eye-teeth in, and I judge the dead-beats of New York city will not soon forget Nat Cooling, of San Joaquin."

SONG.

THE silent bird is hid in the boughs,
The scythe is hid in the corn,
The lazy oxen wink and drowse,
The grateful sheep are shorn.
Redder and redder burns the rose,
The lily was ne'er so pale,
Still and stiller the river flows
Along the path to the vale.

A little door is hid in the boughs,
A face is hiding within;
When birds are silent and oxen drowse,
Why should a maiden spin?
Slower and slower turns the wheel,
The face turns red and pale,
Brighten and brighten the looks that steal,
Along the path to the vale.

THE WELL-AND-WISE-WALKING KHAN.

IN that famous historical period, known as Once upon a Time, there lived in the kingdom of Magadha seven brothers, who were magicians; also, distant from them about a mile—it is well to be precise—lived two brothers, sons of a Khan. The elder of these two went to the magicians to be taught their art; but they cheated him and taught him nothing. The younger, going to look after his brother, peeped through a crack in the door, saw all seven sorcerers hard at work at their spells, and went home as perfect a wizard as any of them. This might not have been a very honourable way of getting to the bottom of the Cabbala in use at Magadha; but honour, as we have it, seems to have been an unknown virtue in the countries treated of by this pretty book* of Eastern fables. As the two brothers went home, the younger instructed the elder to bridle a magnificent horse which he would find in the stables, take him to the seven magicians, sell him, and bring back the money. He then transformed himself into a horse, and went to the stable to be in readiness for his brother. The elder, who was evidently a dunce, at first resisted the command, and wished to keep the animal for his own riding; but he was overpowered by his equine brother, who carried him straight to the door of the magicians' house, where he stood stock still till he was bought.

The magicians at once recognised the beast as supernatural, and resolved to destroy it to keep the monopoly of making magic animals in their own hands. Accordingly they shut it up in a dark stable, one holding it by the head, another by the tail, and four by the legs, while the seventh bared his arm for the death stroke. Then the Khan, by virtue of the magic he had learned through the crack in the door, transformed himself into a little fish; and the seven magicians changed themselves into seven big fishes in pursuit. When

* Sagas from the Far East, or Kalmouk and Mongolian Traditionary Tales.

close on being swallowed as a fish, the Khan made himself into a dove; and the seven magicians became hawks pursuing the dove over hill and dale. They were near overtaking him, when the dove took refuge in the Land of Bede, known to us western Giaours as Thibet; where, to the south, was a shining mountain and a cave within called Giver of Rest; and in this cave dwelt the Great Master and Teacher, Nâgârg'una. The dove flew into the very bosom of the Master; but when the seven hawks, fast flying behind, arrived at the entrance of the cave, they showed themselves once more as men clothed in cotton garments. Then spoke the Great Master and Teacher: "Wherefore, O dove, fluttest thou so full of terror, and what are these seven hawks to thee?"

The Khan's son told Nâgârg'una all that had happened between himself, his brother, and the seven magicians; and besought him that, when the men should come in, as they would, and ask him for the rosary he held in his hand, he would, when giving it to them, bite the string in twain, so that the beads would be scattered on the ground; he, the Khan's son, transformed into the biggest bead of all, being held in the Master's mouth. So it was done. When the beads fell showering on the ground, behold they were all turned into worms; and the seven men clothed in cotton garments made themselves into seven fowls that picked up the worms. Now the Master dropped from his mouth the biggest bead of all; and it was transformed into the form of a man having a staff in his hand. With this staff the Khan's son killed the seven fowls, and the moment they were dead they bore the form of men's corpses. The Master was angry with the Khan's son for this breach of hospitality and for his taking the law into his own hands, and laid on him a penance in expiation of his sin. This was to betake himself to the cool grove, even to the burying-place, where he would find the Siddî-kür, or dead body endowed with magic power (vampire?); who, however, was not much like a dead body of an ordinary kind. From his waist upward he was of gold; from his waist downward of emerald; his head was of mother-of-pearl decked with a shining crown; and if the Khan's son would bring him to the Master his sin would be forgiven.

But to bring him required courage, caution, and constancy. The way was beset with dangers and horrors. After he had gone about a hundred miles the Khan's

son, the Well-and-wise-walking, would come to a dark and dreadful ravine where the bodies of the giant dead were laid. At his approach these would all rise out of their graves and surround him. But if he would call out "Ye giant dead; hala, hala, svâhâ"—words equivalent to our "abracadabra," "hey! presto pass!" and the like—scattering abroad magic barleycorns, they would lie down again and hurt him not. So with the pigmy dead, lying about another hundred miles onward by the side of a river; so of the child dead, yet another hundred miles onward, lying in a garden of flowers, with a grove of trees, and a fountain in the midst. Out of the midst of these trees would rise the Siddî-kür, who would run till he reached his own mango-tree, climbing up to the summit. With the axe White Moon, which the Master would give him, the Well-and-wise-walking was to make as if he would hew down the mango-tree; when, rather than lose his beloved abode, the dead body fashioned of emerald and gold would come down, and let himself be caught. Whereupon the Khan was to thrust him into a sack of many colours, close the mouth tight with cord twisted of a hundred threads of different colours, make his meal off a cake which would never grow less; and throwing the sack over his shoulder he was to trudge back to the Great Master, taking care not to open his lips to speak by the way.

All these perils the Well-and-wise-walking safely encountered and overcame; and, after a short parley and a flourish of the White Moon axe, got the Siddî-kür safe into his sack. Then the Siddî-kür, wily and wary, asked the Khan's son to tell him a tale. The Well-and-wise-walking, mindful of his promise, answered never a word; so the vampire began one on his own account, to enliven the weariness of those long three hundred miles. And the first one he told was about a woman who sought her husband in the palace of Erlik Khan.

Long years ago a young Khan was married to a chief wife whom he did not love. At a mile's distance from his palace lived a beautiful maiden of simple birth whom he did love, and of whom he made his second wife. But, being under fear of his mother insomuch as the maid was not a Khan's daughter, he did not take her home, but visited her in secret. One bright moonlight night, he knocked at her window in his usual way, though not at his usual time. Fearing evil by this un-

timely visit, she trembled when she opened the window; yet there he stood, her beloved husband as she knew him, only more comely in his person than ever, and clad in shining garments which she could not look at steadfastly. When he had eaten of her sweet cakes, and drunk of her rice-brandy, he rose up to go; and saying continually, "Come, sweet wife, come a little further with me," lured her over her own threshold and close to the gates of the palace, whence came a noise of shouting and music.

On her inquiring what this meant, he told her that they were celebrating the rites of his own burial, and that he was now a spirit on his way to the Deva's kingdom. But, that she should not come to loss by his death, he revealed to her where he had hidden the jewel about which his mother and his chief wife were even now contending, and which she was to take from under the god, and so prove her title to be considered the wife regnant, with her son as the heir. As he said this the wife fainted, and was carried by his people to the elephant stable, where, in the night, their son was born. The elephant-tamers, superstitiously fearing that evil should befall their charge by her presence among them, took her and the babe and bore them to the Khan's mother. She then revealed where the jewel was to be found; further repeating what the dead Khan had commanded; namely, that the jewel was to be given to the chief wife who was then to be dismissed to her own people. All this was done, and the mother and the wife of lowly birth were elected to hold the kingdom together, till the boy, born in the elephant stable, should be old enough to reign.

Yet more marvels happened. On the fifteenth of each month the Khan's spirit came in the night to his beloved wife, disappearing at dawn. When she told this to the mother, she also wished to see her son; and her wish could be gratified only by the Khanin undergoing such pain and peril as would woo back the soul of the Khan, her husband, from the Deva's kingdom. Her trials were to be these. She was to pass an ancient man of iron drinking molten metal, and crying, "Yet am I thirsty." To him she was to give rice-brandy, and pass on. To a couple of goats fighting mightily together, she was to give barm cakes, and pass on. To a band of armed men she was to distribute meat, and again pass on. Then she would come to a massive black building round which would be a

moat filled with human blood. A man's skin would wave from the portal as a ghastly banner. At the door she would meet two demons, standing on guard. They were erliks, servants of Erlik Khan, the lord of the underground world of impolite name. To them she was to make an offering of blood, and then enter the building. In the midst of the building she would find eight awful sorcerers sitting in a magic circle. At the feet of each would lie a heart, and each heart would cry out, "Take me!" In the centre of all these would be a ninth heart, and this would cry out, "Take me not!" But this heart she was to seize and carry off notwithstanding its cries, neither looking back nor tarrying nor yet fearing. If she would do all this as she was commanded, then she would win back her Khan from the Deva's kingdom, and keep him for ever with her.

The Khamin was brave and good, and faithfully performed all enjoined on her. Making her offerings to the ancient man of iron, the goats, the band of armed men, and the demons at the gate, she boldly entered the massive black building, and carried off the ninth heart, shrieking, "Take me not!" On which the eight awful sorcerers rose up against her, crying, "A thief has been here, and has stolen the heart. Guards, up and seize her!" But the demons replied, "Us she propitiated with a blood offering; we arrest her not. See you to it." The armed men, too, replied, when the word to seize her was passed to them, "Us she propitiated with a meat offering; we arrest her not. See you to it." So likewise the goats; so the ancient man of iron. Whereupon, having passed all her dangers, she returned still brave and confident to the palace where the Khan in his beauty and might and tenfold glory came forth to meet her; and they fell into each other's arms in a loving embrace, never to be separated again.

"Scarcely could a man have held out so bravely as did this woman," incautiously exclaimed the Well-and-wise-walking. And as he uttered the words, the Siddikür replied, and well he might, "Forgetting his health, the Well-and-wise-walking Khan hath opened his lips." And with the cry "To escape out of this world is good!" he sped him through the air swift out of sight.

Now the whole business had to be begun again from the beginning; wherefore again the Well-and-wise-walking captured the

Siddî-kür in the sack of many colours with its cord of a hundred threads; and again, too, the wily creature of emerald and gold began the tale which the Khan was too wise to interrupt in the commencement. This time it was the story of a prince who "spit gold," after the manner of the diamonds and pearls that fell from the lips of one of our fairy-tale heroines, with the toads and frogs falling out of the mouth of another. In this story, the prince with his follower going as self-sacrifice to the serpent-gods who demanded the tribute of a full-grown man rendered yearly, overheard what the gold-yellow old serpent said to the emerald-green young serpent. Acting on what he heard, he killed them both with his staff; then ate the head of the old yellow serpent while his follower ate the head of the young green one. In consequence of which he spat gold as much as he wanted, and his follower emeralds. On their way back to their own place they fell in with two beautiful and wicked women, mother and daughter, who first made them spit out many bags full of gold and precious stones; then gave them drink whereby they became intoxicated; and finally threw them out on to the roadside drunk and incapable. Coming to his senses and going on his journey, the prince fell in with some boys who were disputing the possession of a cap of invisibility. Setting them to run a race, whereof the first was to win the prize, he clapped the cap on to his own head; then joining hands with his companion, they both became invisible to gods, men, and demons. And the boys had nothing for it but to go home weeping. After this he got from a band of demons, who were also disputing their possession, a pair of magic boots which transported the wearer whither he would be, by a wish. Thus, furnished with an inexhaustible purse in his palate, a cap of invisibility, and a pair of boots to which our own seven-leagued were laggards, it was not wonderful that the voting cakes, by the fall of which the people of a place were about to elect their Khan, should fall into the hollow tree where he and his follower were hidden. Whereupon he was elected, spitting gold as a proof of his worthiness; and his follower, spitting emeralds, became prime minister. In this capacity he discovered that the Khan's wife had for her secret lover, Cuklaketu, the beautiful son of the gods (the Cupid of these sagas), who came to visit her under the form of a bird with many-coloured wings, taking his own form as a lovely youth when safe in

her apartments. Him the Khan, instructed by the prime minister, seized under the form of a swallow; and both together handled him so severely that he was fain to leave his love for ever. His bird form was singed in the wings, his human form marred and scarred; under such conditions he recognised that the Khan was the stronger of the two, and gallantly renounced his prize. So the Khanin, deprived of her lover, turned loyally to her spouse, and this episode of Cuklaketu was as though it were not. The last act of the Khan and his minister was to transform the two wicked women into two she-asses; and when, after a sufficient term of this punishment, the magic word was said which restored them to their proper shapes again, they were found to be so withered, old, and ill-favoured, that no one would have known them for the beautiful creatures they had once been.

At this point of the story the Well-and-wise-walking Khan opened his lips for an aphorism; and the Siddî-kür, crying, "To escape out of this world is good," once more sped through the air swift out of sight. Of course now the whole thing had to be gone over again, and the Siddî-kür was to be once more captured in his mango-tree, and secured in the many-coloured sack as before. As was done; the Well-and-wise-walking trudging homeward so far victorious.

Other stories follow, all told by the Siddî-kür. One relates how the Schimnu-Khan, or chief of the schimnus (demons) was slain. His executioner was Massang, a man with a man's body and a bull's head, horns, and tail. He, in return for his master's clemency in saving his life, resolved on doing him a kind action; but, meanwhile, he had to flee from his presence, being so horribly ugly that the master was fain to turn his eyes from him. Joining to him a full-grown black-coloured man of good understanding, born of the dark woods; a full-grown green-coloured man of good understanding, born of the green meadows; and a white-coloured man also full grown and of good understanding, born of the crystal rock; they all set out on their adventures. The three companions were successively tricked out of the camp dinner by a little old woman who stole their meat; and to hide the manner of the theft, of which they were ashamed, they told falsehoods of how they had been overcome by armed men, oxen, and merchantmen in turn. When Massang came

to keep house on his day, he discovered both the falsehoods and the truth. He, however, outwitted the old woman, labouring her so furiously with her own iron mallet, for which he had substituted a wooden one, that he left her only just enough life to escape to her cave, where, lying herself down on her treasures, she died. Hither Massang and his three companions tracked her by the trail of blood she made; and then the Bull's Head caused himself to be let down into the cave, whence he handed up "to bank" the jewels, and armour of adamant, and other precious things he found therein. His comrades made off with the booty, neglecting to pull up their leader; and Massang was left alone in the cave with the dead body of the witch and three cherry-stones. After a sleep of many years, apparently brought about by impure contact—that is, by the dead body of which he made his pillow—Massang reached the upper air again by means of the cherry-trees which had grown up out of the three stones; and renewed his adventures which ended by landing him at the footstool of the dread Churmusta, or Indra. Here he was shown the constantly recurring struggle of the gods and demons under the form of white and black oxen; and was instructed by Churmusta how to slay the Schimnu Khan, or prince of the demons. He accomplished his task; and even climbed up bodily into heaven, where he found a female schimnu standing by the throne of the Schimnu Khan. The female schimnu struck with an iron hammer at the chain by which Massang had climbed up to the dwellings of the gods—a chain that had come down from above in the track of seven barleycorns; and where she struck, there issued seven bright sparks, which floated upward and remained fixed in the sky; to be called by men the Pleiades.

This is evidently a solar myth easy of interpretation.

Of course the Well-and-wise-walking had his word to say to this too; whereby the Siddi-kür escaped as of old; and was back to his mango-tree in a trice.

Of a dull man who by good luck became acquainted with certain secrets, which he utilised as a sorcerer by means of a pig's head that was his pretended charm; and who, having a conscience, did not demand a large reward for what was really a "fluke," but whose wife made up for his modesty and feathered their nest rarely with a golden lining. Of how the serpent-gods were propitiated by the unselfish love

of Prince Sunshine and the Princess Moonshine. Of "the turbulent subject" who scattered a band of demons somewhat after the manner in which "the brave little tailor" of our own fairy tales defeated the giant; and who partly by fraud and partly by force possessed himself of the goblet that gave all manner of meats and drinks—of the stick that would fly after any one indicated and beat the breath out of his body—of the hammer, that, struck nine times on the ground, would raise up an iron tower nine stories high—and of the leathern bag that rained rain from gentle drizzles to furious torrents according as it was handled; and who, provided with all these magic articles, went back to the city whence he had been banished, built him an iron tower nine stories high, and rained a rain that put out the fire which the Khan and his people lighted to smoke him out, laughing at his beard, and being master to the last. Of the White Bird, and his wife who unwittingly burnt his bird form, and so gave his soul to the demons, but who finally wooed it back again, propping open her eyelids with feather-grass, and hewing on and on at a mother-of-pearl door for seven days and seven nights. Of the wood-carver and the wood-painter who strove together, and how by the astuteness of his wife the former came off conqueror. Of how five men made a garuda bird among them, by which a beautiful woman, the wife of one of them, was rescued from a wicked Khan; and how they all fell in love with her, and strove for her, and snatched at her, so that they tore her in pieces among them. Of how a woman fed the corpse of her former husband, and had the tip of her nose bitten off by the snapping vampire, and got burnt in consequence as a witch. Of how the Brahman's son, following the precepts of his religion, saved the life of a mouse, an ape, and a bear, and of their gratitude and good services in the matter of the talisman by which he, Shrikantha, the Brahman's son, came to honour and good fortune, and took a deva maiden to wife, with a hundred deva maidens as her companions, and had a hundred sons as his body-guard in old age. Of the use of magic language, and the full meaning of the awful word Abaraschika. Of the man who loved meat, and his wife who loved butter, and of the destruction that befel both. Of that other wife who, dressed as a warrior, defeated her husband in a passage at arms, and prudently held her peace. Of the perfidious fox who sowed dissension be-

tween the lion's cub and the calf, sworn friends and foster-brothers as they were. Of how the lamb and the hare terrified the wolf by their innocuous audacity, putting a bold front on matters that else would have been serious, and so escaping scot-free. Of the youth who found out that the Khan had ass's ears, like Midas, and how he told no one but a marmot living in her hole, who repeated the words to the echo, and the echo gave them to the wind, and the wind brought them back to the Khan. Of the minstrel who sang sagas to the Khan, while the gold frog of the tamer danced before him, and the parrot spoke to him wisely; of the white serpent-king who rode on a white horse and was clothed in a white mantle and a white crown, and who gave the red-coloured dog to the tamer in return for the life of the gold frog, who was in reality the serpent-prince; with what befel that red-coloured dog in her form as a lovely maiden robed in white, with white flowers garlanding her head; and how in the end, the tamer, her husband, by an act of retributive treachery, became a Khan, and the father of four sons of such wisdom, might, and power as the world has never seen, before nor since. Of all these tales in their fuller details and pleasant variety of incidents we have not space to do more than give this meagre indication. But to those who read them, they will afford such pleasure as may be gathered from a new collection of Eastern fairy tales.

At the end of each the Well-and-wise-walking Khan invariably forgets his health, makes a foolish remark, and lets the Siddi-kür escape back to his mango-tree once more. It was only after twenty-two lapses into speech, and consequent loss of time, that the Well-and-wise-walking learnt so much of wisdom as is included in the art of holding one's tongue; and then, though the Siddi-kür "heaped up wonders upon wonders, as a man heaps up fagots on a funeral pile, yet spake he never a word." By which the sack remaining fast bound, the Well-and-wise-walking carried his burden of emerald and gold and mother-of-pearl safely to his journey's end, even to the feet of his great Master and Teacher Nâgârg'una. "And Nâgârg'una took the mighty dead, even him endowed with perfection of capacity and fulness of power, and laid him up in the cool grove on the shining mountains of Southern India, venerated by all men as the Siddhitu-Altan even unto this day."

And the moral of these sagas, if there be one at all, is that it is not women alone who are guilty of indiscreet chatter, but that even Well-and-wise-walking Khans can forget their health twenty-two times in succession, and so give the demon power over them and all their past.

MR. MOULD'S BUSINESS.

ONE of the agreeable Elia's most humorous lucubrations is the paper in which he plays with what might seem a painful, or at least a disagreeable subject, namely, the grim and somewhat tawdry homage that death is obliged to pay to eminent respectability and gentility. This penalty is accepted in more enlightened ranks all over the world from mere deference to conventional usage; but those of a lower rank take pride in the rusty trappings and scorbutic attendance that make up a modern funeral. It was an invitation to secure these mortuary honours that elicited the pleasant rambling commentary which occurs towards the end of Lamb's Essays. "The advertisement," he said, "really induced a *tædium vitæ* to read it. Methinks I could willingly die to be in death so attended. The 'two rows all round, close drove, best black japanned nails,' for these were among the seducing ornaments offered by the undertaker, how feelingly do they invite, and almost irresistibly persuade us to come and be fastened down . . . what aching head can resist the temptation to repose, which the 'crape shroud, the cap, and the pillow' present? What sting is there in death which the 'handles with wrought gripes' are not calculated to pluck away? What victory in the grave which the 'drops and the velvet pall' do not render at least extremely disputable? But, above all, the pretty emblematic plate with the angel above and the flower beneath, takes me mightily." Purveyors of humorous conceits might do well to study the above, to learn how satire can deal gracefully with such privileged themes, which, touched by ruder hands, would shock by vulgarity and want of reverence.

This little speculation was written nearly fifty years ago, and yet close to the same locality may now be seen little invitations addressed in the same persuasive and seductive tones. The poorer and more squalid the lane or street, the more dazzling the programme. For these en-

trepreneurs, deeply skilled from their profession in human nature, know that nakedness and starvation in life long to be attended by some sort of hired apotheosis in death. Were Charles Lamb straying about the purlieus of Drury-lane and Great Wildstreet, he would see in many a window these funeral baits set forth temptingly, almost imparting a wistful longing for an anticipatory enjoyment of the luxuries there described. Heaven knows if, after all, it may not be a comfort, or at least a pride, to the poor ragged souls who trudge by, to think that, after their weary journey is over, they may at last rest in "ruffling," be adorned with "wrought gripes," and drawn with all the humble state of crape and japanning to their last home.

It is to be noted that in most of these little proclamations "a nobleman's funeral," at eighteen pounds, leads the way. As a matter of course noblemen are rarely counted among the clients of the gentlemen of the trade in the outlying districts of Drury-lane, and the figure at which a genuine nobleman would be laid to rest would probably far exceed that figure. It may be deemed certain, indeed, that really "eminent" processionists would decline to undertake his lordship for that sum. The preacher, therefore, might find another illustration of the wretched and conventional pomps of death in the fact that there are persons willing to inter their relations under the wretched sham of something that affects to be aristocratic. A nobleman's funeral! We can hear the smooth insinuation of the undertaker to the bereaved family of the "little shop-keeper:" "I would certainly recommend our 'nobleman's funeral,' the most reasonable thing in the trade." And then he runs over the items—the "enamelled furniture," "feathers," "velvets," "crape fittings," "hearse pages," "coach pages"—and of course will be included that hideous bit of pantomime, the mute who walks in front carrying (with difficulty in a high wind) the long tray of plumes upon his head. So on through the various "classes" down to the eighth, where there are no "fittings" and no "pages;" where everything is "finished plain;" and a sort of combination vehicle known as "an improved carriage" (Heaven save the mark!) bears the wretched family and the remains to the churchyard. These things are to be touched reverentially; and though some monstrous and grotesque tributes are levied on grief, still as the survivors find a sort of dismal

comfort in these exercises, and as they seem to be accepted in all conditions, they had best be accepted now. But the nobleman's funeral! It is hard to shut out that idea, or the picture of the bereaved family doing this last honour to the "best of fathers," and taking a dismal pride in the fact that it was known in the district that the poor defunct had enjoyed "a nobleman's funeral."

A quaint notion, that would surely have tickled the midriff of the amiable Elia, and furnished matter for an essay in connexion with this lugubrious subject, once came within the ken of the present writer. On the outskirts of a large city was a favourite burying-ground, which was so far adapted to all tastes that both gentle and simple, the nobleman and the pauper, all found quiet settlement together. It had been formerly a gentleman's residence, with handsome grounds, stately avenue, and substantial family mansion. The enterprising company who bought it soon laid it all out in "desirable" vaults, public burying-ground, and the like; and the whole grew into such favour that every morning some twenty or so of the usual dismal cortéges were seen clustered at the stately avenue gate, each waiting their turn. A sort of rustic village lay upon the high-road that led to the cemetery, whose inhabitants were every morning recreated with those dismal processions trailing by. These spectacles, indeed, became part of their daily economy; they were as natural and necessary as dinner, or going to bed; children were reared from tender years to look on nodding plumes and black cavernous vehicles, and these sepulchral associations became incorporated with their blood and life.

A florid clergyman was employed by the company to perform the necessary services, and it must be said no man could have earned his slender stipend more hardly, or by such painful work. In cold weather and warm, in summer and winter, in frost, snow, and rain, this unfortunate ecclesiastic had to be at his post, emerging in his white surplice, gaining but imperfect shelter from the umbrella, of which some charitable mourner imparted a share, trampling through wet grass, sinking in moister clay. Yet this was hardly the worst. It was the perpetual repetition, the twenty or so services of a morning, the schooling of his naturally jocund features and more jocund voice to a mournful key, the effort at a composed and wistful sympathy in har-

mony with those of the genuine mourners, waiting, not without impatience, it is to be presumed, while the diggers proceeded with their task—here was the iron entering his soul.

This official was lodged in the substantial family mansion of the late owner, situated exactly in the centre of the property, a white, spacious-looking tenement, with many windows. There he resided, with his numerous progeny, and from the great windows could conveniently see each cortege coming up the avenue. The officiator could thus emerge at the proper moment. But situated as his mansion was in such dismal "pleasure grounds," it became the more necessary that some *délassement* or recreation for the mind should be discovered, and it was but natural that our cleric should now and then receive his friends, and have some cheerful little junketings to distract himself against his lugubrious morning's work. Accordingly, of nights the sound of vehicles—vehicles of another kind—was heard along the avenue, cheerful and brisk, trotting and crunching up the gravel. Ladies, in "low dresses" and flowers, were set down, the tall windows were lit up, and there was a sound of music from within. Careless persons, on pleasure bent, and straying over to the windows, perhaps for flirtation, would be not a little startled as the clouds before the moon lifted and disclosed ranks upon ranks of snowy head-stones, crosses, urns, and the more ambitious temples, spreading away in regimental regularity. This revelation would naturally make a sprightly young belle a little silent and uncomfortable. We may imagine, too, the remarks and curious investigations of the waiting coachmen and servants, as they whiled time away; and were there among them a gentleman of Sir Lucius's peculiar vein of thought, he might agree with the baronet in his view that there was "uncommon snug lying" in those well laid-out grounds.

After all, these more ambitious places, with their pomp of temples and such elaborate and costly memorials, suggest decay, and what is transitory, far more than less pretentious spots. At Père la Chaise, where there are almost palaces erected, and wealthy bankers and noble families vie with each other in the sumptuous character of the edifices erected to their dead, there is a surprising air of decay, and sometimes even of ruin. The famous cemetery seems almost like some deserted and neglected

city; there a foundation has "given" a little; there the damp has got in. Very different is the country churchyard, with its flowers and moss-grown head-stones; or the modest French burial-ground, with its crosses, on which are hung the immortelles, and the neat beds duly gardenized. This suggests to my recollection a churchyard in the dunes of the south coast of France, where the graves were dug in sand of a very dry and shifty sort, and where the interment had to be got over quickly, before the sides fell in.

Killarney is a pretty foreign-looking town, which by the reputation of the lakes near it, and the crowds of tourists who visit it, might be supposed to retain little of antique custom or rites. Yet it is not so long since the present writer witnessed some curious sepulchral scenes there. A gentleman who had died in Dublin, was to be interred in this charming lake district. The remains, with a party of friends, went down by the mid-day train, and reached the station at Killarney about eight o'clock at night. As the late gentleman was well known and respected in the district, a number of people were waiting on the platform, and gathered round the van where the coffin was. As it was brought out, a most singular and startling series of sounds was heard, a burst of frantic wailing and lamentation, which made the roof of the station echo and echo again. It proceeded from a band of decent-looking men and women in the dress of peasants, who stood in the front rank, and who tossed their arms wildly, then clasped their hands convulsively, sobbed, and wept in the most agonising fashion. When the procession was formed the genuine mourners took their places in some "covered cars," vehicles of the exact shape of square black boxes, while the band of make-believe bewailers tramped on in regimental order. The effect was wild and picturesque. The chief street of the little town was filled with promenaders, strangers, and natives, walking up and down; lights were in every window; and it quite recalled some foreign watering-place, like Spa or Baden in the season. Still the procession advanced, with its curious avant garde, that filled the air with cries, and seemed to attract little attention, and certainly no sympathy. Thus it proceeded until the church was reached, when the coffin was left for the night.

With the morning, the procession, in far more imposing force, started afresh for the picturesque Muckross Abbey. The irrepres-

sible mourners were well to the front, full of vigour and noise. The performance of these assistants seemed infinitely more remarkable in the daylight. Clenched fists were tossed in the air, breasts were beaten with fury, the voice struggled with convulsive sobs in the throat, while genuine tears streamed down the cheeks. The party seemed to consist of two men, one very old woman, one ditto man, and a couple of young peasants. The women wore the picturesque blue cloak and hood, the men the frieze coats, knee-breeches, worsted stockings, and brogues. The whole was genuine; real tears and real convulsions; and the performers had been trained by long practice to believe they were really grieving for the best of fathers or husbands, as the case might be. The cry rose in a sort of crescendo, and drew a good deal of its effect from the emulative force which one, who had been relaxing a little, would strike in with renewed vigour, and carry all the rest with him. Even at the edge of the grave they were so carried away by these violent emotions, as not to be inclined to stop and allow the clergyman to begin; but the undertaker, with much roughness and contempt, rushed at them seriatim, shaking them, and addressing them in what was decidedly bad language.

This curious custom still obtains in many parts of Ireland.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXIX. CORINNA'S RESOLVE.

WILL GARDINER came away with Lady Duke. "It's really like 'the quarantine,'" she said, her rejected nurse following behind; "quite a cordon sanitaire."

"It is certainly an odd thing," said he, "that a man's relative should be turned out of a house in this style. I tell you what, Lady Duke," he added, abruptly, "I don't half like that Spooner; he is too smooth. He and Master Nagle are pulling an oar apiece in the same boat."

"I quite agree with you. Of course one don't wish to intrude or force oneself in; but I certainly think it is a duty to this poor friendless being, not to let him be handed over to strangers—who may be all that is proper—Heaven forbid that I should judge them; but I do think the whole thing has a very suspicious look."

"So do I, Lady Duke," said he, warmly.

"I don't like this keeping guard, and shutting out people, and letting in others. Why should that fellow Nagle constitute himself keeper if the poor sick fellow isn't to be agitated? Why, if there was a man in the world that would agitate and fuss, he is the very fellow."

"And the real danger is," she answered, "that we don't know what they may do. What is to prevent them putting a pen into the poor creature's hand, and making him sign all sorts of things. Such things you know have been done before now, and by very respectable people."

"Just the thing that oleaginous singing-master would do. And see here, my dear lady, how they have got all their own party about him, from the doctor down to the nurse. I know what I'll do. They shan't dispose of me in that fashion. As soon as the poor fellow gets better, or worse, and he must do one or the other, I'll walk in, and not stir from the house until I see him, not if there were fifty Nagles and Spooners to prevent me."

Mr. Nagle returned home "to snatch a morsel," but not in the best of humours. He felt a little uncomfortable at the thought of the daring combined attempt that had been made to drive him out, and was by no means secure as to the future. He felt also that he had not been saved by his own exertions, but was indebted to the quiet powers of his protégé the doctor. This obligation hurt his pride a little, and he met his family in a rather irritated state.

"There's a mob broken in up there; a perfect cabal, struggling to get a front row as if it was a Jenny Lind night. Disgusting! Disgraceful! But what can I do up there, with no one to help? Corinna, you must come up with me to-morrow, and keep watch and watch. I wouldn't put any villany past this gang. They're furious."

"How do you mean 'watch and watch,' papa? Is it that I am to attend Mr. Doughty?"

"Of course," he answered, testily. "Be his nurse, and that sort of thing. He's as good as your husband; for when he gets better, and begins to try and recollect who gave him his medicine, who smoothed his pillow, and did the ministering angel, and all that, he'll be bound to come forward. The man loves you; surely you see that with half an eye, and now that that skulking snapjacker has taken himself off, there's no let or impediment to Doughty's doing the honourable thing. Come," added Mr.

Nagle, with sudden excitement, for he saw a stern opposition in Corinna's eyes, "I'll have no disputations about it. I owe money enough in this place, and we can't afford to be doing romance."

"But," said Corinna, now speaking with a deliberate coldness that alarmed him, "as you are calculating all the chances of the case, suppose this poor sick patient should be sick to death and not recover."

"Pooh, nonsense," said her father. "Don't be saying such things. That would be a pretty story indeed. Though Heaven knows, with the tormenting gang that are to break in and mob him, it would be hard for any one to recover. It's indecent, so it is. Have you no feeling for a poor lonely creature, that hasn't a true friend in the world outside ourselves, and who literally worships you? Wouldn't you care to save him from the harpies round him, who would think nothing of forcing a pen into his hand, and making him sign away every ha'porth he has in the world? Where would we all be then, I should like to know?"

It was unlucky that Mr. Nagle should have jumbled an appeal to natural feeling with less honourable motives of action. It would be impossible to give an idea of the scorn that flashed from Corinna's eyes, as she replied:

"Now we have it all revealed at last. Oh, father, father, is this what you wish your daughter to do? Make me struggle with these people for a place at his bedside, and, I suppose, myself force a pen into his trembling fingers. Have I not abased myself enough by playing the double game I have done? I can't do it. I must not do it."

"Not do it! Well, of all——" began Mr. Nagle.

"No. At whatever cost, I refuse. As I told you before, the time has come for me to do something to earn my bread, and fortunately an opportunity has offered. I see the sort of profession you would destine me to; to use me for some mercenary scheme—to force me on a man who would despise me in his soul for lending myself to these degrading plots—that is, if he ever recovers strength and health. And I may tell you this, that if I had not been forced into this course of double dealing, now offering me to this man, now to that, and I blush to say it, to whichever of the two appeared most likely to offer himself first—if you had followed a straightforward honest course, you might at this moment have been free from all trouble and anxiety in this matter——"

"What d'ye mean with all this rigma-role? Not that you would have been married by this time! That fellow Duke showed he was eager enough, I'm sure."

"I repeat," said Corinna, "you might have attained the summit of all your hopes by this time. It is no matter how at this moment. You forced me to play a degrading part, and little fancied that you were making me play a part of another sort. Instead of leaving me to my own natural course, you chose this one of finessing and trick, and the result is that you have sacrificed my happiness, and disappointed yourself."

"Which of the two men do you mean?" said he, tortured by this mysterious denunciation. "Why every man, woman, and child in the place saw that you cared for that Duke."

"It is no matter now, as it is all over. I must leave this place at once, as I will not be forced to sink lower than I have done. Most fortunately I am enabled to do so, as only a few days ago an opening occurred. That opera manager will send me away to Italy to a celebrated master in whose family I can live. He is good enough to say that he has confidence in my gifts; that he is sure he will not lose. I do not believe he will, and I have accepted."

The amazement with which Mr. Nagle received this piece of news could not be conceived. He was one of those men who have no force of character, and know not how to confront a crisis of this kind, but become perfectly helpless. A little bluster—"I'll not suffer it," "I'll not tolerate it," "It must be stopped," had only the effect of a wave dashing against a stone wall. He felt this helplessness, and, in presence of his daughter, could find neither words, argument, nor resolution.

"But what am I to do?" he said, at last; "this is all very fine. You think only of yourself. Who's to pay the bills in this place? Here have I spent my time and abilities trying to get you married, and now I am left in the lurch. This man will never recover, and how will we all look then?"

"Heaven forgive me and us all for the unfeeling, cruel part we have played; the unworthy game of deception and double dealing to which he has been made the victim."

"You may say that," said her father. "If you had played your cards properly we should all have been lodged in his house by this time, and this gang of schemers daren't show their faces."

It was curious how Mr. Nagle should have applied the same terms to his rivals that they did to him.

"I am as much to blame as any one else," she answered; "but he will recover, we must pray, and forget those who have caused him so much pain and misery. Let us talk no more of this now, father. One day it will all be cleared up, and Mr. Doughty may know that I have not been so heartless as I have appeared."

With this she swept from the room, leaving her father "put out" as he had never been before in the whole course of his life.

There were some expressions uttered by that gentleman which might have puzzled some of his friends to whom he had been accustomed to dilate on his prosperity, the way in which he was "hunted" by pupils, "not a moment to snatch a bit of dinner," "won't let me keep my very soul in my body." But, as the reader may have already suspected, a good deal of this flourishing state of things was oratorical. The little memorandum-book was, indeed, filled with engagements, but some had begun to suspect that it had about the same relation to real life that a stage volume has to the brain of an actor, who affects to read what disturbs or soothes his soul. Mr. Nagle had been brought up in a certain school, in which it was taught that the great art of success lay in ever seeming busier than you were, thus imitating the barrister's tactics, the little memorandum-book, with its crowded pages, being to the professor what a bag is to the other. Such were the tactics of the illustrious Grimani, whose cabriolet and fiery steed were always urged at headlong speed through the streets of Brighton, always "fearful of being late," and was about as well known as a flying doctor's. Mr. Nagle, however, had not succeeded in making the "system" pay, for the reason that he devoted too much time to the new and more important profession which he had adopted, namely, attendance on his friend, Mr. Doughty, calculating that that gentleman, either by his marriage with Corinna, or by some direct pecuniary assistance, would indemnify all losses. Just as the household purveyors, butchers, bakers, &c., were beginning to press for a settlement now overdue, this unfortunate illness came in the way, and reduced him to a position of much embarrassment. There was, therefore, every reason for his dependence on his daughter. But Corinna was inflexible. She was determined to go, and she met his objections

by declaring that all she earned—for she was to begin by singing at concerts in London—should be sent to him. She had fixed the following Monday for her departure, and her father, making rueful protest, and declaring that she would be his ruin, had to accept the arrangement.

CHAPTER XXX. THE DOCTOR'S SISTER.

MEANWHILE, the unhappy being who was the object of these intrigues continued in the same critical state, and remained under the care of Doctor Spooner. That practitioner had presently installed the nurse, in whom he had such professional confidence. It proved to be his sister, a lady who kept house for him, but who was, indeed, no more than a sort of upper servant in his house, whom no one thought of "calling upon," when the Spooners first arrived, and who did not desire to be called upon. There are many persons in the world who thus, in spite of some official position which entitles them to respect and consideration, somehow sink into a lower rank. She was a reserved, dark-eyed woman, considerably older than her brother, of whom she seemed to stand in awe. Visitors to him rarely saw her save when she flitted past them, gliding up-stairs or down-stairs, and Will Gardiner declared that she exactly gave one the idea of one who, "when a girl, had been captured and brought back when going off with a groom, or who had been caught taking ribbons off a shop counter, and had been in disgrace ever since. Heaven forgive me for saying such a thing," he would add; "but, 'pon my soul, the idea will come back. She can't look you straight in the face." This lady's name was Harriet.

Mr. Nagle was not a little surprised to find this lady in occupation when he returned to Mr. Doughty's house. It seemed to him rather an abrupt and off-hand proceeding of Doctor Spooner thus "to foist" his own sister on the patient—too much of a job to instal two members of a family. He forgot that this was what he would have done himself. As he strode up-stairs the new nurse came out, her finger on her lips, and uttering a very authoritative "hush."

"Better for you not to come in now," she said, "he is asleep."

"Oh, nonsense, ma'am," Mr. Nagle was beginning. "I wish to see myself how he is getting along."

"No, no; my brother's orders are strict. Come down with me to the drawing-room if you wish to say anything."

Mr. Nagle had a good deal to say, and when he got into the room, and the door was closed, said, angrily:

"What is the meaning of this, woman? Where's Spooner?"

"He will be back in a moment. Then you can speak to him. I cannot stay away long, so you must excuse me."

Doctor Spooner was not long in returning. Mr. Nagle at once grappled with him.

"See, sir," he said, "I should like to know who directs in this house, you, I, or the woman that has been foisted in on us?"

"My dear Mr. Nagle," said the other, "as to directing, no one is entitled to do that. We are all co-operating to the best of our ability for the patient's sake."

"No doubt, no doubt. But the tone that has been assumed by the person upstairs—your sister—is not what it ought to be. And I think, Spooner, you were very sharp and off-hand in introducing any one without consulting me."

"But surely you saw the necessity of prompt action. These people with their hired nurses, ready to force them on us! You know that but for the bold step I took they would have combined to turn you out of the house."

"Turn me out of the house!" said the other, in amazement at this free speech.

"Yes. You know they are the relations. You are not in any way connected with him. If I had allowed a common nurse to be put in here, we should have them intriguing, tampering with her, and the poor patient sacrificed. We can rely on my sister Harriet. You see, in whatever light you view it, I was consulting your interest."

This view could not but strike Mr. Nagle, though he still made some grumbling protest about its being "over smart and sharp." He was not satisfied with the behaviour of the protégé whom he had introduced.

He had scarcely gone away, when there was another arrival—Mrs. Gardiner, who crept into the house in a mysterious, sympathising way, and with a sad face asked to see "Miss Spooner."

"Tell her I am here, Anne." She had picked up the name of the servant. "Say I would take it as a particular favour if she would come down to me."

In a few moments the cold, stiff Harriet descended. Mrs. Gardiner flew to meet her.

"Oh, Miss Spooner, this is all dreadful, isn't it? So sorry, I couldn't go and call

with the children. There was poor little Harry in the measles, and I assure you I went nearly distracted."

"Why should you call on me?" said the other, coldly. "I have no wish that my brother's friends should trouble themselves about me."

"No, of course, quite right," said the visitor, not seeing that she was coinciding in a rather uncomplimentary way. Then hurriedly changing the topic, "And how is he going on. You mustn't overwork yourself, dear Miss Spooner. Promise me that you won't. You might break down, you know. Do you know what William and I were planning last night? We are interested in you, you know. When you can get off duty you must run up to us for a mutton-chop or a cup of tea, and rest yourself. Promise me. Will has set his heart upon it."

"You are very good, but I can do nothing of the kind. My duties are here, and I am not to stir from this place."

"I am so glad they have got you," went on the voluble lady, "though Mr. Nagle seemed to have some objection. He wished to have some attendant of his own here, his handsome daughter Corinna. Why it was laughable! She can do nothing but sing her little song and look at her face in the glass."

"I do not know the lady, or anything about her."

"And how cleverly your brother managed it—so quiet and respectful, and yet so firm. I positively admired him."

The cold nurse answered with less coldness:

"My brother is clever—few so clever. He will restore the patient if anybody will."

"I am sure of it," the other replied, rapturously. "We intend to have him when the children get ill again, instead of Murdoch. And I tell you what, Miss Spooner, you'll come in to tea, won't you, in a quiet way, you know—just ourselves? I hear so much of you, and we are all wishing to know you better."

"I regret to have to refuse what would give such pleasure. My duties keep me here. There will be no opportunities for cultivating your acquaintance."

"It is not so much that," said the not-to-be-repulsed lady, "as that I might relieve you here, and you could run down to our house——"

The speaker did not venture to glance at the face of the person she was thus complimenting. The other answered with some-

"That would not do at all."

Mrs. Gardiner rallied in a moment.

"What! you are afraid of that Nagle, who is in command here, and who, I don't think, is overpleased with your brother. Perhaps he thinks he is not obsequious enough to him—my husband fancies he must be a little sorry now for introducing so clever a man, and that he may try to get him out again."

A curious expression came into Doctor Spooner's sister's eyes; but she only bowed, and remained silent. Mrs. Gardiner, a little disappointed, went on: "The Nagles are all very powerful in this house, as possibly you may find, Miss Spooner."

"I think not," said the lady, more abruptly; "as you may perhaps see later on."

"Ah, exactly," replied Mrs. Gardiner, with a confidential eagerness. "But when they can set up a barricade against the poor patient's own blood relations there is no knowing what may happen. However, for his sake, I am delighted at what you say."

"What I say! What do you mean, Mrs. Gardiner?"

"That they are not to have it all their own way. I understand your significant hint. I can tell you we are not to be ejected in this fashion, and steps will be taken in due course to set the matter right. However, you must not overwork yourself, dear Miss Spooner," added the lady, squeezing the nurse's hand. "We must know each other better by-and-bye."

On this Mrs. Gardiner departed, pretty well satisfied with her visit, and believing she had sown a little seed of unpleasantness between the doctor and the music-master which would give her opportunity for cultivating a little plant of her own.

That night, after his dinner, Mr. Nagle put up his nightcap, muffler, &c., with a view of passing a long and weary vigil on "the stretcher" beside his suffering friend. As he walked in, as though into his own house, and laid down his carpet-bag on the study table, Mr. Spooner came down to him.

"You heard what the physician said," began that gentleman, "as to the great care required?"

"Oh, to be sure. Poor, poor Doughty! But we'll all pull him through, never fear."

"That is unfortunately what we are not

at all certain of. Your kindness and attention I am sure he ought never to forget should he recover; but as you have such an interest in him, you will feel that not a chance can be allowed to go by. Now that we have a nurse in the house, it seems scarcely necessary that you should harass yourself by sitting up with him."

"My good fellow," said Mr. Nagle, his brows lowering, "what d'ye mean? There's no harassing in the business. What are you driving at?"

"Your health is equally dear to your family, and it is really superfluous that you should go through all this trouble. Everything will be looked after just as well if you sleep at home in your own comfortable bed. In fact, I have ventured to send away the stretcher that you so kindly sent up."

"I tell you what, Spooner," said the other, "this is going rather too far. It's a liberty, sir. Who are you that take on you to make arrangements here? That bed must be brought back, sir. I don't leave this to-night."

"Oh, that I wouldn't venture to interfere with. You have a certain authority in this house."

"Of course I have. Who brought you in here?"

"I owe that to you, I certainly admit," said the other, humbly; "and, as I say, in the house no one should interfere with you. But the sick-room is my province. If it was my mother or my father, I would behave in the same way. My duty is to restore the patient, if I can, and I can let no consideration of friendship stand in the way."

Mr. Nagle stared, grumbled, but was awed by the manner of his protégé. This distinction between the house and the sick-room seemed to him utterly futile, for the only interest he had was in the sick-room. Still, "the stretcher" had been removed—was at that moment probably in his own hall, and to spend the night pacing about the cold rooms of the house, or lying in an arm-chair, was ridiculous. He was so perplexed and put out by the events of the day, that he knew not how to encounter this fresh and daring opposition. But he went his way home, muttering that he must settle matters with that Spooner, whom he would very soon take "by the scruff of the neck" and put out.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 224. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BORN AND THE BORN."

CHAPTER LI. A WARNING.

THE old gentleman I speak of, I had seen once before; it was at Malory. He was that very Mr. Lemuel Blount whom I and Laura Grey had watched with so much interest as he crossed the court-yard before our windows, followed by a chaise.

As Sir Harry and I, at the end of our northward journey from London, arrived before the door of his ancient house of Dorracleugh, Mr. Blount appeared at the threshold in the light, and ran down, before the servant could reach it, to the door of our chaise. There was something kindly and pleasant in the voice of this old man, who was so earnest about our comforts.

I afterwards found that he was both wise and simple: a sound adviser, and as merry often as a good-natured boy. He contrasted, in this latter respect, very agreeably for me, with Sir Harry Rokestone, whom solitary life, and a habit of brooding over the irreparable, had made both gloomy and silent.

Mr. Blount was easily amused, and was something of an innocent gossip. He used to go down to the town of Golden Friars every day, and gather all the news, and bring home his budget, and entertain me with it, giving all the information I required with respect to the dramatis personæ. He liked boating as well as I did; and although the storms of the equinox prevailed, and the surrounding mountains, with their gorges, made the winds squally and uncertain, and sailing upan the lake in certain states of the weather dangerous, he and I used to venture out I dare say oftener than was strictly prudent. Sir Harry used to

attack him for these mad adventures, and once or twice grew as tempestuous almost as the weather. Although I was afraid of Sir Harry, I could not help laughing at Mr. Blount's frightened and penitent countenance, and his stolen glances at Sir Harry, so like what I fancied a fat schoolboy might be when called up for judgment before his master.

Sir Harry knew all the signs of the weather, and it ended by his putting us under condition never to go out without his leave, and old Mr. Blount's pleadings and quarrelsome resentment under his prohibition were almost as laughable as his alarms.

In a little time neighbours began to call upon me, and I was obliged, of course, to return these visits; but neighbours do not abound in these wild regions, and my quiet, which I had grown to love, was wonderfully little disturbed.

One morning at breakfast, among the letters laid beside Sir Harry was one, on opening which his face darkened suddenly, and an angry light glowed in his deep-set eyes.

He rapped his knuckles on the table; he stood up and muttered; sat down again in a little while, and once more looked into the letter. He read it through this time; and then turning to Lemuel Blount, who had been staring at him in silence, as it seemed to me knowing very well what the subject of the letter must be—

"Look at that," said the baronet, whisking the letter across the table to Mr. Blount. "I don't understand him; I never did."

Mr. Blount took the letter to the window, and read it thoughtfully.

"Come along!" said the baronet, rising and beckoning him with his finger, "I'll give him an answer."

Sir Harry, with these words, strode out of the room, followed by Mr. Blount; and I was left alone to my vain conjectures.

It was a serene and sunny day; the air, as in late autumn it always is, though the sun has not lost its power, was a little sharp. Some hours later, I and my old comrade, Mr. Blount, had taken to the water. A boatman sat in the bow. I held the tiller, abandoned to me by my companion, in right of my admitted superiority in steering, an art which I had learned on the estuary at Cardyllion.

Mr. Blount was not so talkative as usual. I said to him at last:

"Do you know, Mr. Blount, I once saw you, before I met you here."

"Did you?" said he; "but I did not see you; where was that?"

"At Malory, near Cardyllion, after the wreck of the Conway Castle, when Mr. Marston was there."

"Yes, so he was," said the old gentleman; "but I did not know that any of Mr. Ware's family were at home at the time. You may have seen me, but I did not see you; or, if I did, you made no impression upon me."

This was one of my good friend's unconscious compliments which often made me smile.

"And what became of that Mr. Marston?" I asked. "He had a wonderful escape!"

"So he had; he went abroad."

"And is he still abroad?"

"About six weeks ago he left England again; he was here only for a flying visit of two or three months. It would be wise, I think, if he never returned. I think he has definitively settled now, far away from this country, and I don't think we are likely to see his face again. You're not keeping her near enough to the wind."

I was curious to learn more about this Mr. Marston, of whom Mr. Carmel, and Laura Grey—each judging him, no doubt, from totally different facts, and from points of view so dissimilar—had expressed such singularly ill opinions.

"You know Mr. Marston pretty well, do you?" I asked.

"Yes, very well; I have been trying to do him a service," answered Mr. Blount. "See, see, there; see—those can't be wild ducks? Blessed are the peace-makers. I wish I could, and I think I may. Now, I think you may put her about, eh?"

I did as he advised.

"I have heard people speak ill of that

Mr. Marston," I said; "do you know any reason why he should not be liked?"

"Why, yes; that is by people who sit in judgment upon their neighbours; he has been an ill friend to himself; I know but one bad blot he has made, and that, I happen to be aware, hurt no one on earth but himself; but there is no use in talking about him, it vexes me."

"Only one thing more; where is he now?"

"In America. Put this over your feet, please; the air is cold; allow me to arrange it. Ay, the Atlantic is wide enough; let him rest; out of sight, out of mind, for the present at least, and so best."

Our talk now turned upon other subjects, and returned no more to Mr. Marston during our sail.

In this house, as in most other old country houses, there is a room that calls itself the library. It had been assigned to Mr. Blount as his special apartment. He had made me free of it; either to sit there and read, whenever I should take a fancy to do so; or to take away any of the books to the drawing-room. My life was as quiet and humdrum as life could be; but never was mortal in the enjoyment of more absolute liberty. Except in the matter of drowning myself and Mr. Blount in the mere, I could do in all respects exactly as I pleased; dear old Rebecca Torkill was established as a retainer of the house, to my great comfort; she talked me to sleep every night, and drank a cup of tea with me every afternoon in my room. The quietude and seclusion of my life recalled my early days, and the peaceful routine of Malory. Of course, a time might come when I should like all this changed a little; for the present, it was the only life I thought endurable.

About a week after my conversation with Mr. Blount during our sail, Sir Harry Rokestone was called away for a short time by business; and I had not been for many days in the enjoyment of my tête-à-tête with Mr. Blount, when there occurred an incident which troubled me extremely, and was followed by a state of vague suspense and alarm such as I never expected to have known in that quiet region.

One morning, as I sat at breakfast with Mr. Blount for my vis-à-vis, and no one by but the servant who had just handed us our letters, I found before me an envelope addressed with a singularity that struck me as a little ominous.

The direction was traced, not in the ordi-

nary handwriting, but in Roman characters, in imitation of printing; and the penmanship was thin and feeble, but quite accurate enough to show that it was not the work of a child.

I was already cudgelling my brains to discover whether I could remember among my friends any waggish person who might play me a trick of this kind; but I could recollect no one; especially at a time when my mourning would have made jesting of that kind so inopportune. Odder still, it bore the Malory post-mark, and unaccountable as this was, its contents were still more so.

They were penned in the same Roman character, and to the following effect:

MISS WARE,—Within the next ten days, a person will probably visit Golden Friars, who intends you a mischief. So soon as you see, you will recognise your enemy.

Yours,

A FRIEND.

My first step would have been to consult Mr. Blount upon this letter; but I could tell him nothing of my apprehensions from Monsieur Droqville, in whom my fears at once recognised the "enemy" pointed at by the letter. It might possibly, indeed, be some one else, but by no means, I thought, so probably as the other. Who was my "friend," who subscribed this warning? If he were not Mr. Carmel, who else could he be? And yet, why should not Mr. Carmel write to me as frankly as he had spoken and written before? If it came from him, the warning could not point to Monsieur Droqville. There was more than enough to perplex and alarm one in this enigmatical note.

CHAPTER LII. MINE ENEMY.

I WAS afraid to consult even Rebecca Torkill; she was a little given to talking, and my alarms might have become, in a day or two, the property of Sir Harry's housekeeper. There is no use in telling you all the solutions which my fears invented for this riddle.

In my anxiety I wrote to the rector's wife at Cardyllion, telling her that I had got an anonymous note, bearing the Malory post-mark, affecting so much mystery that I was totally unable to interpret it. I begged of her therefore to take every opportunity of making out, if possible, who was the author, and to tell me whether there was any acquaintance of mine at pre-

sent there, who might have written such a note by way of a practical joke to mystify me; and I entreated of her to let me know her conjectures. Then I went into the little world of Cardyllion and inquired about all sorts of people, great and small, and finally I asked if Mr. Carmel had been lately there.

In addition to this, I wrote to the postmaster, describing the appearance of the letter I had got, and asking whether he could help me to a description of the person who had posted it?

Every time a new theory struck me, I read my "friend's" note over again.

At length I began to think that it was most probably the thoughtless production of some real but harmless friend, who intended herself paying me a visit here, on visiting Golden Friars. A female visitor was very likely, as the note was framed so as to indicate nothing of the sex of the "enemy;" and two or three young lady friends, not very reasonably, had been attacking me in their letters for not answering more punctually.

My mind was perpetually working upon this problem. I was very uncomfortable, and at times frightened, and even agitated. I don't, even now, wonder at the degree to which I suffered.

A note of a dream in one of my fragmentary diaries at that time will show you how nervous I was. It is set down in much greater detail than you or I can afford it here. I will just tell you its "heads," as old sermons say. I thought I had arrived here, at Dorracleugh, after a long journey; Mr. Blount and a servant came in carrying one of my large, black travelling boxes, and tugged it along the ground. The servant then went out, and Mr. Blount, who I fancied was very pale, looked at me fixedly, and placing his finger to his lip in token of silence, softly went out, also, and shut the door, leaving me rather awe-struck. My box, I thought, on turning my eyes upon it again, from my gaze at Mr. Blount, seemed much longer, and its shape altered; but such transformations do not trouble us in our dreams, and I began fumbling with the key, which did not easily fit the lock. At length I opened it, and instead of my dresses, I saw a long piece of rumpled linen, and perceived that the box was a coffin. With the persistent acquiescence in monstrosities, by which dreams are characterised, I experienced the slightest possible bewilderment at this, and drew down the linen covering, and discovered

the shrouded face of Mr. Marston. I was absolutely horrified, and more so when the dead man sat up, with his eyes open, in the coffin, and looked at me with an expression so atrocious, that I awoke with a scream, and a heart bounding with terror, and lay awake for more than an hour. This dream was the vague embodiment of one of my conjectures, and pointed at one of the persons whom, against all probability, I had canvassed as the "enemy" of my warning.

Solitude and a secret fear go a long way toward making us superstitious.

I became more and more nervous as the suspense extended from day to day. I was afraid to go into Golden Friars, lest I should meet my enemy. I made an excuse, and stayed at home from church on Sunday for the same reason. I was afraid even of passing a boat upon the lake.

I don't know whether Mr. Blount observed my increased depression; we played our hit of backgammon, nevertheless, as usual in the evening, and took, when the weather was not boisterous, our little sail on the lake.

I heard from the rector's wife. She was not able, any more than the Cardyllion postmaster, to throw the least light upon my letter. Mr. Carmel had not been in that part of the world for a long time.

I was haunted, nevertheless, by the image of Mr. Marston, whom my dream had fixed in my imagination.

These letters had reached me as usual as we sat at breakfast. Mine absorbed me, and by demolishing all theories, had directed me upon new problems. I sat looking into my tea-cup, as if I could divine from it.

I raised my eyes at length, and said:

"When did you say—I forget—you last heard from Mr. Marston?"

He looked up. I perceived that he had been just as much engrossed by his letter as I had been with mine. He laid it down, and asked me to repeat my question. I did.

Mr. Blount smiled.

"Well, that is very odd. I have just heard from him," said he, raising the letter he had been reading by the corner. "It came by the mail that reached London yesterday evening."

"And where is he?" I asked.

"He's at New York, now; but he says he is going in a few days to set out for Canada, or the backwoods—he has not yet made up his mind which. I think, myself,

he will choose the back settlements; he has a passion for adventure."

At these words of Mr. Blount, my theories respecting Mr. Marston fell to the ground, and my fears again gathered about the meaner figure of Monsieur Droquille; and so soon as breakfast was ended, I sat down in the window, and studied my anonymous letter carefully once more.

Business called Mr. Blount that evening to Golden Friars; and after dinner I went into the library, and sat looking out at the noble landscape.

A red autumnal sunset illuminated the summits of the steep side of the glen, at my left, leaving all the rest of the cleugh in deep, purple-grey shadow. It opens, as I told you, on the lake, which stretched before me in soft shadow, except where its slow, moving ripple caught the light with a fiery glimmer; and far away the noble fells, their peaks and ribs touched with the same misty glow, stood out like majestic shadows, and closed the view sublimely.

I sat here, I can't say reading, although I had an old book open upon my knees. I was too anxious and my head too busy to read.

Twilight came, and then gradually a dazzling, icy moonlight transformed the landscape. I leaned back in my low chair, my head and shoulders half hidden among the curtains, looking out on the beautiful effect.

This moonlight had prevailed for, I dare say, ten or fifteen minutes, when something occurred to rouse me from my listless reverie.

Some object moved upon the window-stone, and caught my eye. It was a human hand suddenly placed there; its fellow instantly followed; an elbow, a hat, a head, a knee; and a man kneeled in the moonlight upon the window-stone, which was there some eight or ten feet from the ground.

Was I awake or in a dream? Gracious Heaven! There were the scarred forehead and the stern face of Mr. Marston with knit brows, and his hand shading his eyes, as he stared close to the glass into the room.

I was in the shadow, and cowered back deeper into the folds of the curtain. He plainly did not see me. He was looking into the further end of the room.

I was afraid to cry out; it would have betrayed me. I remained motionless, in the hope that when he was satisfied that there was no one in the room, he would withdraw from his place of observation, and go elsewhere.

I was watching him with the fascinated terror of a bird, in its ivied nook, when a kite hovers at night within a span of it.

He now seized the window-sash—how I prayed that it had been secured—and with a push or two the window ascended, and he stepped in upon the floor.

The cold night air entered with him; he stood for a minute looking into the room, and then very softly he closed the window.

He seemed to have made up his mind to establish himself here, for he lazily pushed Mr. Blount's easy-chair into the recess at the window, and sat down very nearly opposite to me.

If I had been less shocked and frightened I might have seen the absurdity of my situation.

He leaned back in Mr. Blount's chair, like a tired man, and extended his heels on the carpet; his hand clutched the arm of the chair.

His face was in the bright white light of the moon, his chin was sunk on his chest. His features looked haggard and wicked. Two or three times I thought he saw me, for his eyes were fixed on me for more than a minute; but my perfect stillness, the deep shadow that enveloped me, and the brilliant moonlight in his eyes, protected me.

Suddenly I heard a step; it was Mr. Blount; the door opened, and the step was arrested; to my infinite relief a voice, it was Mr. Blount's, called a little sternly:

"Who's that?"

"The prodigal, the outcast," answered Mr. Marston's deep voice, bitterly. "I have been, and am, too miserable not to make one more trial, and to seek to be reconciled. You, sir, are very kind, you are a staunch friend; but you have never yet done all you could do for me. Why have you not faith? your influence is unlimited."

"My good gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Blount, not moving an inch from where he stood. "Why it is only this morning I received your letter from New York. What is all this? I don't understand."

"I came by the same mail that brought my letter. Second thoughts are the best. I changed my mind," said the young man, standing up. "Why should I live the sort of life he seems to have planned for me, if he intends anything better at any time? And if he don't, what do I owe him? It is vindictive and unnatural. I'm worn out; my patience has broken down."

"I could not have believed my eyes," said Mr. Blount. "I did not; dear, dear

me! I don't know what to make of it; he'll be very much displeased. Mr. Marston, sir, you seem bent on ruining yourself with him, quite."

"I don't know; what chance have I out there? Out of sight out of mind, you used to say; he'd have forgotten me, you'd have forgotten me; I should not have had a friend soon, who knew or cared whether I was alive or dead. Speak to him; tell him he may as well listen to me; I'm perfectly desperate," and he struck his open hand on the back of the chair, and clenched the sentence with a bitter oath.

"I am not to blame for it," said Mr. Blount.

"I know that; I know it very well, Mr. Blount; you are too good a friend of our family; I know it, and I feel it, I do indeed; but look here, where's the good of driving a fellow to desperation? I tell you I'll do something that will bring it to a crisis; I can't stand the hell I live in; and let him prosecute me if he likes; it is very easy for me to put a pistol to my head—it's only half a second and it's over—and I'll leave a letter telling the world how he has used me, and, then, see how he'll like the mess he has made of it."

"Now, pardon me, sir," said Mr. Blount, ceremoniously, "that's all stuff; I mean he won't believe you. When I have an unacceptable truth to communicate, I make it a rule to do so in the most courteous manner; and, happily, I have, hitherto, found the laws of truth and of politeness always reconcilable; he has told me, my dear sir, fifty times, that you are a great deal too selfish ever to hurt yourself. There is no use, then, in trying, if I may be permitted the phrase, to bully him. If you seek, with the smallest chance of success, to make an impression upon Sir Harry Rokestone, you must approach him in a spirit totally unlike that. I'll tell you what you must do. Write me a penitent letter, asking my intercession, and if you can make, with perfect sincerity, fair promises for the future, and carefully avoid the smallest evidence of the spirit you chose to display in your last—and it is very strange if you have learned nothing—I'll try again what I can do."

The young man advanced, and took Mr. Blount's hand and wrung it fervently.

I don't think Mr. Blount returned the demonstration with equal warmth. He was rather passive on the occasion.

"Is he—here?" asked Mr. Marston.

"No, and you must not remain an hour in

this house, nor at Golden Friars, nor shall you go to London, but to some perfectly quiet place; write to me, from thence, a letter such as I have described, and I will lay it before him, with such representations of my own as perhaps may weigh with him, and we shall soon know what will come of it. Have the servants seen you?"

"Not one."

"So much the better."

"I scaled your window about ten minutes ago. I thought you would soon turn up, and I was right. I know you will forgive me."

"Well, no matter, you had better get away as you came; how was that?"

"By boat, sir; I took it at the Three Oaks."

"It is all the better you were not in the town; I should not like him to know you are in England, until I have got your letter to show him; I hope, sir, you will write in it no more than you sincerely feel. I cannot enter into any but an honest case. Where did your boat wait?"

"At the jetty here?"

"Very good; as you came by the window, you may as well go by it, and I will meet you a little way down the path; I may have something more to say."

"Thank you, sir, from my heart," said Marston.

"No, no, don't mind, I want you to get away again; there, get away as quickly as you can." He had opened the window for him. "Ay, you have climbed that many a time when you were a boy; you should know every stone by heart."

"I'll do exactly as you tell me, sir, in all things," said the young man, and dropped lightly from the window-stone to the ground, and I saw his shadowy figure glide swiftly down the grass, towards the great lime-trees that stand in a receding row between the house and the water. Mr. Blount lowered the window quietly, and looked for a moment after him.

"Some men are born to double sorrow—sorrow for others; sorrow for themselves. I don't quite know what to make of him."

The old man sighed heavily, and left the room.

I felt very like a spy, and very much ashamed of myself for having overheard a conversation certainly not intended for my ears. I can honestly say, it was not curiosity that held me there; that I was beyond measure distressed at my accidental treachery, and that had there been a door near enough to enable me to escape unseen,

I should not have overheard a sentence of what passed. But I had not courage to discover myself; and wanting nerve at the beginning to declare myself, I had, of course, less and less as the conference proceeded, and my situation became more equivocal.

The departure of Mr. Blount, whom I now saw descending the steps in pursuit of his visitor, relieved me, and I got away from the room, haunted by the face that had so lately appeared to me in my ominous dream, and by the voice whose tones excited a strange tremor, and revived stranger recollections.

In the drawing-room, before a quarter of an hour, I was joined by Mr. Blount. Our tête-à-tête was an unusually silent one, and, after tea, we played a rather spiritless hit or two of backgammon.

I was glad when the time came to get to my room, to the genial and garrulous society of Rebecca Torkill, and after my candle was put out, I lay long enough awake, trying to put together the as yet imperfect fragments of a story and a situation, which were to form the groundwork of the drama in which I instinctively felt that I was involved.

AERIAL POSTAL SERVICE.

THE most important of the indirect results, scientifically speaking, of the German siege of Paris, was unquestionably the impetus that was then given to the tantalising problem of aerial navigation. The circumstances of the case, unique in the history of the world, were such as to stimulate to the highest degree the invention and the energy of those within the walls. The difficulties which have commonly beset the path of the would-be experimentalist in aerostation were suddenly diminished or removed. The man who offered to supply the means of communication between the beleaguered city and the unconquered territories of France, was at least sure to receive a full and patient hearing. It was no longer a question of commercial profit and risk, but one of national prosperity and existence, which had to be solved.

None of the ordinary means of transit were available. No scout or messenger could traverse the triple line of the enemy's outposts, or the impenetrable screen of ubiquitous light cavalry beyond. The river, as well as the roads, was in hostile possession. The realms of air alone re-

mained free from any obstructions, save those which had hitherto baffled the ingenuity of man. Therefore the balloon, till then considered as a toy, came for the moment to be regarded as a device only second in value to gunpowder itself. At the express invitation of the Government of National Defence, several hundred propositions to construct and launch aerostatic machines of a manageable character, were submitted to scientific committees officially established. The doors of the more famous Academy were beset by clamorous projectors, and the tables of that learned corporation groaned beneath the weight of memorials backed, it is true, by formidable columns of figures, but in no instance based on even the most trivial of accomplished facts. The combined report of the scientific committees, so-called, and of the commission appointed by the Academy to examine into the claims of the different applicants, was of a discouraging nature. Those who had come before them were but theorists, too needy or too prudent to have realised at their own expense, even on the smallest scale, the dreams which they desired others to accept as certainties. One and all, moreover, however widely they might differ as to the best method of navigating the air, concurred in the single point of demanding a large and immediate subsidy from the government wherewith to commence operations. The perusal of this collective report decided the authorities unequivocally to reject the immense majority of the proposals. A brilliant exception was, however, made in favour of Monsieur Dupuy de Lôme.

Many concurrent circumstances appeared to point out Monsieur Dupuy de Lôme as the successful candidate. He was a man of mark, partly politician, partly savant, like so many of the celebrities of the Second Empire. He was also, himself, a member of the Academy of Sciences, and although not an experienced aeronaut, he had yet taken a fervent interest in all that related to the inchoate art of aerostation. But his chief claims to distinction were comprised in the fact that he was the first to plan and construct those iron-clad ships of war of which the earliest model was the once famous *Gloire*, and that, as a maritime engineer, his name ranked higher than that of any living Frenchman. The government granted him an instant advance of forty thousand francs, and placed at his disposal a lavish supply of machinery, materials, and skilled labour, while many persons

were found sufficiently hopeful to predict the most complete success as the result of his endeavours.

Monsieur Dupuy de Lôme, unfortunately for the success of an experiment conducted under conditions so auspicious, adopted a method known in France as the "*Système Giffard*," and which, having been unsuccessfully tried in 1852, had not even the merit of novelty. The aerostat, of varnished silk, was of an oval shape, and was intended to be inflated with ordinary coal-gas. According to the suggestion tendered, eighty years ago, by Meusnier, a small compensating balloon was introduced into the larger one, to keep the latter distended when the volume of gas should be diminished. Lastly, the motive power was to be derived from the manual labour of four men, working, two at a time, at a crank which caused a four-bladed helm to revolve in a manner similar to that of the screw-propeller of a sea-going steamship. The original designer, Monsieur Giffard, had relied for a motive power on a miniature engine driven by steam, and it was a natural apprehension of the risk entailed by carrying aloft a source of heat that induced his imitator, eighteen years later, to have recourse to mere muscular exertion. Modest as were the expectations of Monsieur Dupuy de Lôme (the speed anticipated not exceeding, in still weather, the moderate velocity of five or six miles per hour), they were disappointed by the sluggishness of the workmen employed in the manufacture of the balloon and its adjuncts, and the war came to an end before the mechanism was completed.

Driven to despair by the tardiness of the tentative experiments to solve the vexed question of aerial navigation, which were from time to time announced in the meagre journals of the besieged city, the Government of National Defence empowered Monsieur Rampont, Director-General of the Paris Postal Administration, to conclude such contracts as he might deem desirable for the building and launching of balloons of the customary type. There were then in Paris several men of considerable experience in the handling of these unstable structures, and among them was the well-known Nadar, whose balloon, the *Géant*, had two years before made a voyage to Belgium with nearly twenty passengers. There was also *Glorieuse*, the Belgian aeronaut, whose ascents rivalled in number those of his more celebrated colleague, while, beyond the limited

circle of these professionals, there were collected in Paris a number of the choicest seamen of the imperial navy, resolute, hardy, and willing to confront the perils and responsibility of a cruise, in an element more fickle than that to the caprices of which habit had inured them. Accordingly, fifty-four large-sized balloons were, at irregular intervals, despatched from within the fortifications of Paris, carrying with them, in addition to their human freight, with the needful supplies of ballast, instruments, and provisions, a grand aggregate of two millions and a half of prepaid letters.

It will be evident that, so far as regarded the transmission of news from Paris to the departments, the balance of probabilities inclined perceptibly towards the side of the French. It was but necessary to await a favourable wind, and for this purpose all winds but one were favourable. Towards the east, and towards the east alone, did the enemy occupy any great extent of country. Southwards, northwards, and to the westward of the endangered capital lay populous provinces hastily arming to continue the struggle with the invader. The blockading forces, except in rear of their conquering line of march from the Saar to the Seine, formed but a thin belt, impervious, but easily overleaped when once an altitude beyond the range of a rifled musket had been attained. The hopes of the sanguine population of Paris were at their highest when the first of their ventures made its triumphant ascent on October the 7th. This balloon, the first and the most noteworthy of the entire series, was called the *Armand-Barbés*. Its car contained, in addition to the men in charge of the aerostat, two weighty bags of letters from the central office in the Rue Jean Jacques Rousseau, a basket of carrier pigeons, purchased at an extravagant price by the authorities, and a passenger whose name was soon to be widely noised abroad—no other than Monsieur Gambetta, soon, as Dictator of the French Republic, to inspire with his own fiery zeal the lukewarm impulse of national resistance to the foreigner. The *Armand-Barbés*, buffeted by variable winds, occupied no less than four hours and fifteen minutes in the short voyage to Epineuse, where Monsieur Gambetta and his companions narrowly escaped capture by the dreaded Uhlans. The first instalment of the correspondence was intercepted by the Prussian patrols, while the fate of a consort balloon, the *Georges-Sand*,

launched on the same day, remains unknown.

On October the 12th, one week later, two balloons were let loose, and on the 14th, two more, one of which, the *Godefroy-Cavaignac*, reached Bar-le-Duc in safety; its passengers, Monsieur de Keratry and his two secretaries, contriving to make their way securely to the French headquarters. Meanwhile the principal post-offices in Paris were beset by eager crowds, chiefly composed of women, who, with tears and urgent entreaties, implored the overworked officials to undertake the transmission of their letters to husbands, sons, and parents beyond the German lines. Nothing could easily be more piteous than the contrast between the confidence of these poor people, and the hazardous fashion in which the communications by post were inevitably conducted. Each balloon, as it parted from the restraining ropes, and floated, slowly revolving, down the wind, was as passively the sport of fortune as is the stormed-tossed mariner on a raft, guided only by the waves and currents. The simple strategy of the most veteran aeronaut is bounded by certain traditional manoeuvres, such as the throwing out of ballast when the machine threatens an untimely ascent, the expulsion of gas when he proposes to near the earth, and the dexterous casting of a grapnel to facilitate a landing which, at best, presents some of the rough features of a shipwreck.

Habit, and familiarity with danger, no doubt confer, as in all perilous occupations, upon the trained adventurer of the air an exceptional aptitude for availing himself of such casual advantages as may present themselves. His practised eye and steady brain enable him to survey, without dizziness, the country that is spread beneath him like a map seen through a diminishing lens, and to calculate, with some approach to accuracy, his elevation above the surface of the earth. He can endure also the numbing chill of the low temperatures to which he may be exposed by too lofty an ascent, and is indifferent to the nausea, akin to sea-sickness, which is engendered by the rotary motion, and frequent heaving of a wind-borne aerostat. In most respects, however, a picked seaman is, almost at the outset, a match for even an experienced aeronaut, so that the selection made by the Paris Government of Defence was by no means of an injudicious character. It is a matter of familiar experience that a good sailor possesses, not

merely activity and presence of mind, which his calling exacts, but also a readiness and fertility of expedients which appear extraordinary to a landsman. The hardy man-of-war's men who volunteered to take charge of postal balloons, did their duty bravely and intelligently, and the numerous mishaps that occurred should in justice rather be imputed to the inherent imperfections of the system than to any neglect on the part of those who fell victims to them.

With varying success, but with untiring diligence, the enterprise was renewed. Three balloons, the *Vauban*, the *Galilée*, and the *Daguerre*, fell within the outposts of the German army, and in the first instance only did the aeronauts succeed in effecting their escape; but for each of these three failures three prosperous voyages should be registered. More remarkable than these was the career of the *Archimède*, launched from Paris on November the 21st, and which, after repeatedly changing its course, in obedience to the veering wind, finally grounded in Holland, not far from the mouth of the Scheldt. This balloon had been with difficulty prevented from descending in Belgium, but the aeronauts, who had totally lost all reckoning of the route they had pursued, mistook the sound of Flemish speech for that of their German enemies, and, throwing out of the car the whole of their ballast and stores, contrived to prolong their flight for several miles. This voyage, however, was eclipsed by the more memorable one of the *Ville d'Orléans*, which balloon, leaving Paris on November the 23rd, incurred the imminent danger of being drifted off into the illimitable waters of the North Atlantic, and after long hovering over the German Ocean, at last touched ground in Norway, having thus surpassed the hitherto unexampled flight of what is known in the annals of aerostation as the *Nassau* balloon. Less fortunate was the *Jules Favre*, which, with its car and passengers, was sighted at different stations on the Cornish coast, and last seen off the Scilly Isles, hurrying out into the Atlantic before a north-east wind. The *Ville de Paris*, starting on December the 15th, crossed the *Rhenish* frontier, and fell in the former duchy of Nassau, but the majority of ventures proved successful until, on January the 28th, the last despatch took place.

Taken at the best, the process of intrusting human life and valuable correspondence to what is simply a huge fluttering bag filled with gas, is of a rough nature,

and produces rough results. The details of each voyage are painful, either in a humanitarian or a scientific sense of the word. There is waste of power, of exertion, of suffering, of property, and too often of existence. Each aerial flight entails exposure to fierce vicissitudes of heat, cold, and wet, to hunger often, and always to fatigue. Even a favourable descent is attended by bruises and uncomfortable sensations, that endure for weeks and months; while the precious letters have continually to be abandoned, or committed to the care of ignorant or greedy peasants, and the balloon itself is in most cases destroyed or deserted. As for the return voyage, regarding which so many confident prognostications had been uttered, it remained among those dreams that are never destined to be realised. Attempts were made, at Tours and at Rouen, to launch a balloon that should penetrate within the guarded walls of Paris, but the efforts of the too-ambitious aspirants proved utterly futile. Of the enormous amount of letters sent forth from the capital, the vast majority compulsorily remained unanswered. But what the utmost skill and science of a brilliant and ingenious population, disposing of very great resources, could not, by mechanical means, accomplish, was partly effected by enlisting in the service of mankind the unerring instinct of a bird.

Carrier pigeons, thanks to the existence of a society of professed colombophiles, were sufficiently numerous in Paris, although less attention had been paid to the training and preservation of the purer breeds than was the case at Ghent and Antwerp. Still many baskets containing pigeons were despatched by the various balloons which left Paris, and although some of these birds perished of cold and damp, and others fell into Prussian hands, it was computed that seventy per cent of the entire number were received in safety by the provincial postal authorities, and set at liberty to return to Paris with tidings from without. It is a statistical curiosity that, out of three hundred and sixty-three birds, only fifty-seven ever reached home, the remainder being wholly lost. The season of the year, with its inclemency and foggy atmosphere, was singularly unfavourable to the progress of the carrier pigeon, which requires clear air and an unclouded sky to exercise in perfection his astonishing powers of vision, but such of these winged voyagers as did arrive brought with them

the only letters which entered Paris during the blockade, and which, photographed on a scale of extreme minuteness on thin sheets of collodion, twenty of which could be lodged in a quill attached to the pigeon, were afterwards enlarged by the aid of the camera.

In the mean time another beleaguered city, on which the eyes of Europe were fixed with almost as keen an anxiety as that with which the investment of Paris was contemplated, was cut off from communicating with the realm of which it formed a bulwark and a rallying point of defence. Metz, with her impregnable fortifications, under the shadow of which the finest army of France had been gathered, lay completely secluded from the rest of the country. It was natural that some effort should be made to break the unnatural silence that prevailed, and to communicate the hopes, the fears, and the projects of those within the fortified place to their countrymen and well-wishers. It was a medical officer of the garrison, Monsieur Jeannel, holding the rank of pharmacien-major, to which no English military equivalent exists, who first conceived the idea of organising a post that should be independent of the enemy's possession of the roads. The notion of using, as at Paris, an aerial machine capable of being directed at will, or a balloon of sufficient capacity to support one or many men, could not for a single instant be entertained. Metz, it is true, being the one grand arsenal of France, the head-quarters of her engineers and artillery, and the site of her schools for the instruction of the scientific arms of the service, must have contained a large assortment of tools and materials applicable to the construction of such engines. But the officials in charge of the stores, of whatsoever sort, manifested a marked unwillingness to permit any inspection of what was in their keeping, while the commander-in-chief maintained an inaction which has since become matter of history. Whatever was to be done must plainly be effected at the private cost, and by the labours of, an officer of the medical staff, and necessarily on a small scale.

Monsieur Jeannel, like a true Frenchman, began by asking for his humble enterprise the consent of his official superiors, and that of Marshal Bazaine was quickly notified to him through the medium of the chief of the staff, who took on himself the responsibility of making to the inventor, from the military chest, an advance of a

thousand francs. The workshop in which this miniature manufacture was to be carried on was installed in a loft over the military hospital of Fort Moselle, and there was no lack of volunteer zeal among those attached to the hospital administration, but, as usual, the physical difficulties of the process considerably retarded the realisation of the original design. Monsieur Jeannel's idea had simply been to construct small balloons, which might be capable of conveying a light load of letters, and which, if sent adrift on a day when the wind blew from a favourable quarter, could scarcely fail to fall into friendly hands. Even within the zone of the German occupation it might be expected that every Frenchman would find himself in a tacit conspiracy to speed upon its way the correspondence of his countrymen in besieged Metz. Each packet of letters was to be docketed with a distinctly written entreaty to whosoever found it to place the documents, at the earliest opportunity, in a French post-office, and it was probable that national sentiment would cause the request to be complied with.

But Monsieur Jeannel did not at first realise how difficult was the task which his patriotism and innate love of science had urged him to undertake. It is, *ceteris paribus*, a far easier task to build a large balloon than a small one. For the waste and imperfection which are almost inevitable incidents of the manufacture produce less sensible effects when the area of the envelope which is to encase the gaseous mass is much increased. And this is still more notably the case when the agent is so subtle and delicate a gas as the pure hydrogen which Monsieur Jeannel, like Gay-Lussac, eighty years before, had selected on account of its superior levity. Oiled silk, or, more correctly, silk which had been varnished over with a solution of gutta-percha or india-rubber in benzine, was the material with which the pharmacien-major first commenced operations. But this substance, hard, stiff, and heavy, proved eminently unsuitable for a balloon that was designed to contain, when inflated, but one metric cube of gas. Recognising the inappropriate character of this ponderous material, the inventor next had recourse to a balloon composed of lozenges of silk sewn together, and carefully coated over with collodion steeped in castor oil, of which a large supply was at hand. This expedient also proved a complete failure, since the balloon not merely proved weightier

than a corresponding volume of air, but the rapidity with which the hydrogen escaped was of itself sufficient to discourage a projector less tenacious of spirit than was the military apothecary of Metz.

The tendency of hydrogen, and especially of that produced by the action of acidulated water on iron, to escape from its place of confinement, has been for many years a stumbling block to the constructors of aerostats. Nothing appears more reasonable than, when preparing a piece of apparatus which derives all its value from its lightness when in action, to make choice of the lightest aerial matter for its inflation. Yet since hydrogen gas is difficult and costly as to its manufacture and its storage, it has been found practically more convenient to build much larger balloons for the purpose of employing the humbler and more economical agency of coal gas. It does not appear to have suggested itself to Monsieur Jeannel, however, to rely on anything less imponderable than the hydrogen, with a small supply of which he had already furnished himself, and all his faculties were now bent on discovering a suitable envelope to confine it. A large bag was next constructed of the tough tracing paper of which there was no lack among the drawing materials provided for the engineer school, and this tiny aerostat proved itself capable of an ascent, in captivity, which lasted for thirty-five minutes, when the gradual escape of the gas put a close to the experiment.

Insensibility to discouragement is a quality indispensable to an inventor, and Monsieur Jeannel proved himself to possess this inestimable faculty. The tiny aerostat was varnished over with medicated colodion, but the result was the production of a membrane too dry to cohere with the paper of the balloon, and it was not until a large admixture of ether had modified this inconvenient peculiarity that a fresh ascent was practicable. On this occasion the Lilliputian balloon was able to support itself in proximity to the ceiling for three hours, and some slight improvements having been effected in the manufacture, another of these diminutive contrivances was rendered capable of sustaining a weight of forty grammes of ballast for a space of no less than five hours. This was in itself a triumph for the originator of the scheme. For the velocity of a moderate breeze, calculated at the low average of five metres, or about sixteen English feet, to the second, would in theory

suffice to waft this toy of science, with its light burden, to a distance of nearly sixty English miles before the gas should be exhausted, while with a brisker wind nearly double that speed might be anticipated. This means of communicating with the world beyond the German leaguer offered every prospect of success, since a balloon of such small dimensions could scarcely attract the notice of the enemy's cavalry patrols, while it was nearly certain, on falling, to come into the possession of some one whose sympathies would be on the French side. When, however, Monsieur Jeannel informed the marshal commanding-in-chief that he was now prepared to forward head-quarter despatches to at least the weight of seventy grammes, he was met with a politely evasive reply. The cold shade of official patronage, in this as in so many similar instances, was destined to blight the more brilliant anticipations of the too sanguine discoverer.

Marshal Bazaine declined to intrust any documents of an official nature to the pigmy balloons of Monsieur Jeannel. But he authorised the latter to transmit, at his convenience, the private correspondence of the officers of the blockaded army, and the construction of the little aerostats was unremittingly pursued. If the chief of the beleaguered force was lukewarm or indifferent, such certainly was not the case with many of those under his command. Overjoyed at the prospect of communicating with absent friends beyond the limits of Prussian occupation, the besieged made zealous offers of co-operation in the work in hand, and a convalescent officer in hospital, Captain Marchant, undertook the voluntary duties of director of this aerial post-office. The correspondence of the army flowed in on such a scale that the means of transport could not keep up with the supply of letters, and Monsieur Jeannel and his military postmaster found themselves compelled to enforce with Draconic severity a regulation which limited each despatch to the slender weight of one décigramme. The volunteer administration distributed among intending correspondents a number of small oblongs of an extremely thin paper, known technically as pelure, which, when written over and addressed, were to be simply folded in two for transmission. Each packet of letters, wrapped in varnished paper, was legibly inscribed with a request to the finder to convey the contents to a French post-office.

The total number of these dwarf balloons constructed and launched by Monsieur Jeannel amounted to fourteen, carrying with them no fewer than three thousand separate letters, and precisely one-half of these reached the goal in safety. The total cost of the manufacture, inclusive of that of the preliminary experiments, was exceedingly small, giving an average of one pound sterling for each balloon sent adrift with its packet of letters. Nor did Monsieur Jeannel desist from his humble but eminently useful task, until the Department of Military Engineers had undertaken to construct, on a great scale, at the expense of the state, a number of large aerostats to accomplish in a more complete manner what the pharmacien-major had begun so well. It may be added that these government aerostats, each of which entailed an expenditure of from five to six thousand francs, were never finished, and that to Monsieur Jeannel's tiny fleet of aerial mail-packets was due the transmission of such tidings as were forwarded from Metz to the families and friends of the many officers there detained during the weary months of the blockade.

It is of course manifest that the forwarding of correspondence by means of balloons, whether accompanied or not by aeronauts, is an expedient not likely to be resorted to except in very exceptional cases. War and siege can alone occasion the pent-in population or garrison of a city or fortress to imitate the conduct of the mariner who, when his ship is in mortal peril, casts into the sea a bottle containing some written message which he hopes that tide and current may one day conduct to some friendly haven. But a time may come in which the experience acquired during the Franco-German war may need to be utilised, and when familiar modes of communication may have to give way to the strange and hazardous expedient of intrusting letters and despatches to the caprices of so unstable a medium as the air. Evidently no method hitherto devised is even an approach to perfection. The carrier pigeon, in spite of his marvellous instinct and surprising rapidity of flight, furnishes a statistical average of failure far above that of the balloon; and considering the economy and rapidity of the manufacture, it must be admitted that we have more to learn from the toy balloons of Monsieur Jeannel at Metz than from either the flying machine of Monsieur Dupuy de Lôme, or the more bulky aerostats, the ascent of which, from

Paris, served to inspire the populace of the capital with hopes not fated to be realised.

THE RING.

AY, gaze on it, touch it, it is the ring
I used to treasure so.
The self-same stones were glistening,
When you taught me their speech to know;
To find Faith in the sapphire's deepening blue,
And Hope in the ruby's sanguine hue,
And the diamond flashed affection true,
In the lore learnt long ago.

Had not the teacher an empire strange,
The lesson a magic might,
That thus I remember through wrong and change,
Through treachery, chill, and blight?
Ah! the sapphire still glows, though faith is fled,
The ruby is blushing that hope is dead,
And why, when the Love's last dirge is said,
Should the diamond gleam so bright?

And has, indeed, no shadow past
O'er the glittering toy you hold?
The gems the same as you saw them last,
The same the burnished gold,
And yet you glance from it to me,
As if the clue to a riddle to see;
For how should the pledge on the finger be,
When the heart to the troth is cold?

And that our love is cold, you know,
Ay, cold as the touch of Death,
And over its grave lies the smooth white snow,
That melts not to passion's breath.
Our moan is made, our tears are wept,
So quick the dull grey mosses crept,
We scarce could find it where it slept,
When it perished of broken faith.

What, are the keen eyes dull or blind,
That they ponder the puzzle yet?
Can they not one silent token find,
That duty has paid her debt?
Ay, so; the god from his shrine is ta'en,
Fond memory's plea was bootless pain.
You look for the dark brown curl in vain,
Once deep mid the jewels set.

Nay, hush man's proud impetuous thought,
Man's jealous spirit quell;
It was but with woe and folly fraught,
Our wild youth's first love-spell.
Let friendly hands clasp cordially,
And friendly eyes meet fearlessly,
And friendly tones say earnestly,
"So be it, it is well."

SOME OLD ROGUERIES.

ROGUERY should be a profitless vocation with cheap newspapers and daily police reports to put us on our guard against the wiles of those who trade upon the simplicity of honest folk than themselves. Things were different two hundred and fifty years ago, when Master Thomas Dekker did his best, in his own quaint way, to open people's eyes to the devices of the wicked world of rufflers, upright-men, hookers, priggers of prancers, gulgroppers, rancke-riders, falconers, horse-courers,

dommerats, glymmerers, and other oddly-named members of the fraternity of rogues when James the First was king.

Then, as now, thieves were of two kinds, those who robbed in defiance of the law, to fall sooner or later in its clutches, and those who robbed with the law's aid, and went scot-free to the end of the chapter. Of the two the latter sort were infinitely the worse; common thieves rarely robbed the same man twice, while the others devoured his substance piecemeal, and never left him till he was stripped bare as a vine in December. To this, apparently never-to-be-extinct order of rascality, belonged the gulgroper, who, well furnished with gold pieces, haunted ordinaries, where gaming followed hard upon a two-shilling dinner. When the cards or dice ran counter with some scapegrace of means or expectations, the gulgroper would beckon the unlucky gamester to a side window, condole with him upon his ill-luck, reminding him dice were made of women's bones, and would, therefore, cozen any man, but yet for his father's sake, if he wished to try his fortune again, he need not be baulked for want of a hundred pounds or so. If the spendthrift hearkened to the voice of the tempter, as he was pretty certain to do, the gold was quickly produced and handed over in exchange for a bond for something more than the amount lent, to be redeemed the next quarter-day. If luck turned and the borrower seemed likely to be able to pay up then and there, the gulgroper sneaked quietly away to avoid the unwished-for settlement of his debt. He took care, however, to meet his young friend a day or two before the bond fell due to feed him with "sweet words," and make him believe a little delay in taking up his bond would be of no consequence. If acting on this belief the victim let the time run by, he quickly found himself compelled to choose whether he would go to prison, or give another bond for three times the amount of the original loan.

If a novice in dissipation was not driven by his own need into the usurer's net, his creditless companions had no compunction in bringing him to the same pass as themselves, to effect a temporary replenishment of their exhausted purses. They did not exactly ask him to do a little bill, though in the end it came to much the same thing. The wind was raised after a more roundabout fashion by the "taking up of commodities," in this way. Suppose four gallants who have spent all in riotous living, or lost all at the gaming-table, taking counsel together how

to re-line their empty pockets with angels. One of them suggests they should take up commodities; that is, buy goods wholesale upon credit to sell them for ready money immediately afterwards. The only difficulty is that, as the joint guarantee of the allied bankrupts would not be accepted for as many shillings as they want pounds, they must persuade some acquaintance of unbroken fortune or unmortgaged "possibilities" to help them with his name. Having caught their heir, he, taking his associates for birds of his own feather, under a cloud the coming quarter-day's sun will disperse, readily agrees to join in the merry venture. Then a "tumbler" is sought out and instructed to ascertain where five hundred pounds' worth of easily convertible goods may be obtained upon their joint bond. He knows exactly where to find his man, but after being absent long enough to have scoured the City, he returns with the alarming announcement that no goldsmith, draper, or mercer is willing to do business with them. He is told if he cannot get plate, silks, or cloths, he must get what he can, "brown-paper, tobacco, lutestrings, Bartholomew babies, hobnails, or two hundred pounds' worth of Saint Thomas's onions, and the rest in money." Then the commissioner contrives to find a tradesman to their mind, who parts with the goods in exchange for a bond, making his five customers jointly and separately answerable for the money being paid upon a certain day. And yet they are not happy. If obtaining the commodities was difficult work, to turn them into cash proves more difficult still. The tumbler's aid is again invoked. He goes, of course, straight to the seller, who offers to take back his wares at a discount of thirty per cent. The tumbler reports money is so scarce that no one will buy at any price, but by the luckiest accident he ran against a friend, who for a trifle of ten pounds will undertake to find some one to take the things off their hands at a difference of thirty pounds in the hundred. The offer is closed with, the wares sent off, the money received. Then the partners divide the proceeds between them, the original five hundred pounds—after deducting the hundred and fifty lost on the re-sale, the ten pounds paid to the tumbler's imaginary friend, and another ten pounds given to the tumbler himself—being represented by three hundred and thirty pounds, or just sixty-six pounds apiece. When the day of payment arrives, four of the five signers of

the bond are not to be found, as the bondholder well knew would be the case, and the poor greenhorn is called upon to pay the five hundred pounds or go to prison. Rather than do that, he seals to any bond, mortgages any lordship, says anything, does anything, pays anything. Then, "being a little way in, he cares not how deep he wades; the more he is trusted the more he comes in debt. Thus gentlemen are wrought upon, thus they are cheated, thus they are undone."

Shakespeare's jolly Windsor boniface becomes serious enough when certain English-speaking Germans, after having the Garter at command for a week, borrow his horses to go to meet their duke on his way to court, and, throwing Bardolph in the mire, "set spurs and away like three German devils or three Doctor Faustuses," and he is not much comforted at knowing that his brothers of Reading, Maidenhead, and Colebrook have been cozened in the same way. The false Germans belonged to the tribe of rancke-riders, described by Dekker as "horsemen running up and down the kingdom, ever in a gallop, their business weighty, their journeys many, their expenses great, their inns everywhere, their lands nowhere." These gentry usually worked six or seven together, two of them attired like gentlemen, the rest as blue-coated serving-men. Booted and spurred, with their clothes well splashed or sprinkled with dust, as if they had travelled many miles, the gang made their way to a good inn, the leader asking, in a loud voice, as they entered, if the footman had gone home with the horses, a question quickly answered in the affirmative by a respectful blue-coat. A few words with the host, and they were soon taking their ease in their inn, winning the landlord's good opinion by spending moderately without bating a penny of any reckoning. Meanwhile their blue-coated accomplices were busy making friends with the inn-servants, in the pursuit of useful knowledge respecting themselves, their master, and his other guests. Having learned all they wanted to know, the knaves became communicative in turn, and talked of their master's fine property in some far-away county (of which no one in the house was likely to know anything), and of the large sum of money he would carry home when the business he had come to town about was settled—a business likely to occupy him for three months, at the very least—this coming, in due course, to the innkeeper's ears, he became doubly attentive to the pair of rogues

in gentlemen's clothing, and they, gradually unbending, grew familiar with him, declared him capital company, and insisted upon him dining or supping with them, as happened to be most convenient. Just as the party began to wax merry, their mirth was interrupted by the entrance in hot haste of a half-breathless footman, bearing a message to the squire from some well-known great man living twelve miles or so off, entreating him to come to him without delay upon business that would not wait. Up jumped the squire, chafing and swearing because his horses had been sent home, cursing his folly in not keeping them with him, offering to pay anything to have himself, two cousins, and his men properly horsed, and be enabled to obey his dear and noble friend's summons, as became a man of his degree. Eager to be of service to so worthy a gentleman, mine host told him to take the best horses in his stables, and, before many minutes elapsed, the rancke-riders were in the saddle and off, as fast as their steeds could take them, to the nearest horse-fair; and before he awoke to the fact that he had been cozened, the innkeeper's horses were pastured a hundred miles away, and the thieves were quietly counting their gains over a bottle at a quiet country inn.

Here they would remain until the affair had blown over. Not that they were idle the while. Every well-to-do farmer or free-handed squire dwelling within walking distance of their lodging-place was pretty sure to receive a call from one or other of them; and while wondering what the fashionably-dressed personable stranger could want with him, find himself, ere he well knew it, accepting his visitor's invitation to take a turn or two in the garden or orchard, and listening to the plausible tale of a gentleman of better means than his outside betokened—one who had commanded in the field, but was eaten up, like many a good soldier, by the canker of peace, and lying at an inn not far off, had incurred a trifling bill there, which, for the credit of a gentleman, he could not leave unpaid. Might he be beholden to his kindness for the loan of forty shillings, to bear himself and his horse to London, from whence he would send him repayment in a day or two, with many thanks for the courtesy? Often the glib-tongued rascal got all he asked; but if his dupe proffered him half, he was not too proud to accept it, and thank the lender. Nay, the smallest of fish were sweet to such anglers—"they are the most con-

scionable market folks that ever rode between two paniers, for from forty they will fall to twenty; from twenty to ten; from ten to five; nay, they are not ashamed to take two shillings of a plain husbandman, and sometimes sixpence, of whom they have demanded a whole fifteen." Sometimes the streets of a quiet town would be startled by the apparition of a horseman, hatless, cloakless, with empty scabbard dangling at his side, galloping as if for dear life. When brought to a stand, with distracted looks and breathless voice he told from whence he came, and how he had been disarmed by villains, and despoiled of his gold, his silver, and his clothes. Such a thing might happen to any man, and believing it had happened to him, out came the purses of pitying listeners, until he was furnished with sufficient money to take him comfortably to his supposed journey's end, and with more clothes than covered his back when he started.

The "falconer" was a species of swindler peculiar to an age when dedicators paid for flattery in hard cash; as soon as authors looked to public, rather than private, patronage for reward, his occupation was gone. He was a mock author, cleverer than real authors, since he could make a good living out of what no one would buy. Having raked together sufficient material for a small volume, on the principle that a book's a book, although there's nothing in it; and written, or got some one else to write, a dedicatory epistle adapted for all conditions of patrons, our literary land-shark put it into the printer's hands. While his bantling was going through the press, he had time to make up his mind what county he should do, and to provide himself with a list of its titled and untitled gentry. He then had as many copies of his book bound as he had names on his list, each name figuring in its turn upon the dedication page. Procuring a fellow to play servant, hiring a couple of lean hacks, and disguising himself in scholarly garb, the rogue set out on his tour. Arriving at the nest holding a possible pigeon, the falconer alighted and knocked for admittance. The gate being opened, he left his companion to walk the horses in the outer court, and walking boldly up to the hall introduced himself to the most consequential servitor in sight, as a gentleman who had ridden from London on a matter of urgent business, to be imparted only to the ear of his worshipful master. Ushered into the latter's presence, he accosted him after

the following manner: "Sir, I am a poor scholar, and the report of your virtues hath drawn me hither, venturesomely bold, to give your worthy name as a patronage to a poor short discourse, which here I dedicate, out of my love, to your noble and eternal memory." As he ended his speech, the falconer presented the "bird," with a gilt-filleted, vellum-covered volume, with fourpenny ribbon streaming from each corner. Turning over the title-page, the recipient of the unexpected gift came upon his own name, standing out in bold letters over a flattering epistle-dedicatory, "as long as a henchman's grace before meals." Flattered by such an unlooked-for compliment from a London scholar, the unsuspecting squire could not do less than thank his visitor for his love and labour; and in consideration of the miles he had ridden, and the cost he had been at, tender him four or five angels for his pains, supplementing the gift with an invitation to breakfast; or, "if the sun-dial pointed towards eleven," to dinner. Making a polite excuse for declining the kind offer, "with thanks and legs, and kissing his own hand," the impostor took his leave, remounted his hack, and made for the nearest inn, where the spoil was divided, at the rate, in old player's parlance, of a share and a half for himself, and half a share for his assistant.

In term time, or when parliament was sitting, the falconer did not go so far afield, the game he hunted was to be caught in town. He ran a little more risk; a doubting gentleman, respecting his genuineness, might tell him to call again to-morrow, and despatch a messenger Citywards to see if the stationers of St. Paul's Churchyard were acquainted with such a book, and if they knew nothing of it, might even send the messenger on to the printer. That worthy, however, was prepared for such inquirers, and readily produced his stock; if the absence of the dedication were noticed, that was easily explained—the author would not venture to add that necessary appendage to his work until he had obtained the authority of his hoped-for patron. Some of these rogues avoided the expense of printing a book. They went into the waste-paper market to pick up clean copies of an unknown or forgotten work, only troubling the printer to supply a new title and a page of dedication in blank; inserting a name as occasion required by means of a set of letters they carried with them. Others, more economical still, travelled up and down the country with "witty

inventions written and engrossed on vellum, parchment, or royal paper, richly adorned with compartments, and set out with letters both of gold and on various colours." When they came to a nobleman's place, they would wait upon him, and present him with a copy bearing his name "fairly texted out in manner of a dedication." Taking it to be a special compliment to himself, my lord generally proved courteous; never dreaming any alehouse keeper might hang up the selfsame thing in his "boozing-room," if he chose to pay the price of copying it to the transcriber who supplied the rascals with their stock-in-trade. Then there were strolling school-masters going from town to town, setting up patterns of penmanship, and undertaking, with one day's teaching, to enable any one who came to them to write "as fair and fast as a country vicar who commonly reads all the town's letters." Their terms were half the fee upon a pupil entering his name, and the rest when the lesson was given another day. Having drawn his half-pay for doing nothing, the scamp took down his specimens and decamped; and when the would-be rapid writers came to be instructed, they found the school-master was abroad and likely to remain so.

Ringing the changes is an old trick now, it was a new one at the beginning of the seventeenth century; at least Dekker thought it was, but we fancy we have read of something of the sort bringing rogues to the pillory long before his time. He describes his newly-discovered cheat as a creature with the head of a man, the face well-bearded; the eyes of a hawk; the tongue of a lapwing crying "here he is," when the nest is a long way off; the paws of a bear, holding whatever they once fasten upon; the swift foot of a greyhound, and the stomach of an ostrich, digesting silver as easily as that bird digests iron. With a good coat on his back, and other belongings to match, the "jack-in-the-box" appeared at a goldsmith's stall, in a draper's shop, or wherever he knew "good store of silver faces were to be seen." Drawing forth a handsome box, hammered out of silver plate, he opened it and poured out twenty or forty twenty-shilling pieces in new gold. While the shopkeeper contemplated the heap of worldly temptation, Jack explained that he was a gentleman having occasion for a supply of white money, but knowing not how suddenly he might be called to Venice or Jerusalem, he was unwilling to disfigure himself of gold, and would

gladly pay anything, in reason, for the loan of forty pounds' worth of silver upon the security of his angels. Knowing the pawn to be better than any bond, the unsuspicious citizen handed over the silver, and his customer departed with many thanks for his goodwill. A man of his word, Jack, in four or five days' time, brought back the borrowed silver, his box was produced, its angels counted, and the box set down while the shopkeeper counted up his white money. While he was so engaged, Jack deftly exchanged his box for one exactly like it, which poised in the hand seemed of the weight too, although it contained nothing but shillings. Presently the tradesman discovered the tale of silver was short by some thirty or forty shillings. Jack was astonished, but, gathering his wits together, remembered he had put by that very sum for a particular purpose and forgotten to make it good. The mistake could soon be remedied. Leaving his box with his friend he took back the silver, promising to return with it in an hour or two and redeem his gold. We need not say if he kept promise a second time. Master Jack would appear to have made a rare raid from Ludgate to Temple Bar, for Dekker thus apostrophises that famous City thoroughfare: "O Fleet-street! Fleet-street! how hast thou been trimmed, washed, shaven, and polled by these dear and damnable barbers! Many of thy gallants have spent hundreds of pounds in thy preserves, and yet never were so much as drunk for it; but for every forty pounds that thou layest out in this Indian commodity of gold, thou hast a silver box bestowed on thee to carry thy tobacco in, because thou hast ever loved that costly and gentlemanlike smoke."

We might fill another page with the tricks by which the lesser fry of rognery lived, but it would be wasting time and space—we have their prototypes among us yet, living, robbing, and cheating, much as they did in the old days, and as they will, in all probability do, as long as the world lasts.

RHYME AND REASON.

IN remarking that where ignorance is bliss, it is a point of wisdom to remain unenlightened, we don't pretend to originality. From the days of Adam downwards, few suns have risen and set without producing some fresh illustration of this unquestionable fact. We are concerned only with its novel application.

Has it ever occurred to the music-loving reader, as ranking among the more consoling dispensations of his experience, that four-fifths of the lyric effusions to which he has been accustomed to listen with unmixed delight, have been actually unintelligible? How might not his sentiments have been modified, could he have understood more distinctly the inane rubbish those accomplished vocalists and that skilled orchestra are doing their utmost to stifle and conceal?

The difficulties of libretto are too well appreciated to bear criticism in their relation to poetry. Poet and librettist belong not only to different schools, but different spheres. Shakespeare would have broken down, where Alfred Bunn revelled and ran. Shelley would have shrunk, like his own sensitive plant, from that sestette which, to Fitzball, would have been no more than the taking a pinch of snuff. When Sheridan Knowles, with a poet's rashness, once yoked his Pegasus to such a car, the grand old hunter refused the hobble and hop, and kicked the concern to pieces.

The powers of music are severely tested, in investing with anything like serious interest such morsels as the following, derived from a but too-faithful rendering of a French operetta, and representing the close of a scene, positively turgid with emotions of the most distressing kind:

FATHER. I must refuse.
 LOVER. Nay, let her choose!
 MARIE. Edward, ex-cuse—
 My duty calls.
 FATHER. Avoid these halls!
 LOVER. List, my Marie!
 To heav'n and thee—
 FATHER. Fiddle-de-dee (!!)
 MARIE. 'Tis our love's knell.
 ALL. Farewell! Farewell! (Exeunt.)

But the ballad-poet has less claim, if any, to indulgence, and wherefore this description of writer should regard and demean himself as the born foe of sense and reason, is among the mysteries not likely to be solved until the coming age. When time and foreign intercourse have familiarised us more with the lyric literature of neighbour states, we shall understand better why a love-song need not, as a rule, appear to be the production of a lunatic, nor a sentiment—touching and attractive in its native simplicity—be thrust into an ill-fitting fancy garb, and made preposterous. Why should not fact and fancy join hands and voices? If we love a woman, why invoke her as a fairy? As if true love were not a very tangible reality, why should we insist on investing it with all manner of theoretical

if carried out—would be to the last degree embarrassing to the amiable party it was intended to propitiate? We will adduce an example or two. What but the immortal music that was designed to be wedded to the sentiments we are about to quote, would have saved them from perdition?

Not without a pang do we indict that cherished melody, *Celia's Arbour*, before the tribunal of common sense. Only when the last delicious murmur has died upon the ear, can we consent to take cognisance of the amount of nonsense veiled in those delightful strains. Four rational human beings have united in instigating a certain humid wreath to commit suicide—by hanging—outside an arbour in which a young lady, who has an imprudent fancy for sleeping in the open air, may be expected to pass the night.

An impression seems to exist that the first act of the young and hardy Celia, on rising with the dawn, will be to place the damp and dripping thing upon her head. In this very improbable contingency, the humid wreath is charged with the tremendous crammer—the most indefensible assertion—that the dew-drops, now shedding rheumatism on Celia's fair neck and shoulders, are, in fact, some gentleman's tears!

But, in fact, your true British ballad-writer is never happy, unless when entreating impossibilities. "Drink to me only with thine eyes," implores a voice familiar to us from childhood, proceeding to add other suggestions which might puzzle a council of conjurors. Reduced inexorably to prose, the programme might read as follows:

"Take a jolly good look at me, and I'll return it with interest.

"Leave a kiss, if you can hit upon any method of so doing, within the cup, and, in that case, bother the champagne!

"Whenever I am, literally, a 'thirsty soul,' I require nothing less potent than the nectar of the gods; but even if Jove passed the bottle, I would not change it for thine. (This, I know, sounds hardly civil, but my poet-friend and I mean exactly the reverse of what we say!)

"A day or two since I sent you a bouquet, not so much (once more I must appear discourteous) in compliment to you, as hoping that your acknowledged skill in the preservation of flowers might tend to their longevity.

"You, however, merely placed them to

factorily explained, returned them to the sender. Nevertheless, I have the pleasure of assuring you that my rejected offering comes back to me, charged with a most grateful fragrance, imparted, I doubt not (indeed, I recognise it), by one or other of those charming essences which deck your toilet-table."

Be it far from us to poke fun at that old and ever-welcome favourite, Flow on, Thou Shining River. Our business is simply with the words, words to which we have listened with indulgence, as skilfully adapted to the half-sad, half-hopeful melody. But a poet's invocations, like a lover's perjuries, provoke Jove's mirth. Were the thousandth part of these reckless petitions complied with, the consequences would be very much beyond laughter to the sons of men. Let us see, for example, what would most probably have resulted in the present case:

*Flow on, thou shining river,
But, ere thou reach the sea,
Seek Ella's bower, and give her
The wreath I fling on thee.*

We will imagine the polite stream assenting, and narrate what followed, in the form of a letter addressed by Ella, next morning, to a bosom friend:

The Bower, April 1st.

Oh, my darling Myra! such an adventure! Now, don't think I am dreaming, for here it is—the wreath I mean—but I'm so bewildered—hanging at my bed's head. I have the most awful cold, and can hardly write for sneezing.

Well, dear, last night, I was lying half asleep, listening to the distant murmur of that pretty little sparkling brook, beside which we have so often sat, talking of—well, no matter. Suddenly I thought the sound grew louder, nearer. I could distinguish the gushing sound of approaching waters, even the crash of objects swept into collision. I heard papa's window thrown up, and his voice sternly demanding of something, or somebody, what was the matter.

I had just jumped out of bed when Lucy broke into the room. "Oh, please miss, the Ripple's bust, 'as swep' away the boat-house, kivered my lady's rose-garden, and's comin' dead up to the house. We shall all be drowned in our beds. Oho! Oho!"

We staggered to the window, and flung it open. It was perfectly true. The little Ripple, swollen, as I supposed, by yesterday's rain, had completely flooded our poor garden, and was just beginning to dash

against the house door. I had just time to utter one scream, when (now comes the wonderful part) a misty form seemed to rise before me, and a quiet gentlemanly voice accosted me thus:

"It is with extreme regret, my dear Miss Blank, that I find myself the author of such a domestic disturbance. I have been requested by my friend, Mr. Augustus Waddilove, who dwells on my margin, to wait upon you, en route to the sea, and present you with this garland"—passing a very pretty one through the window. "Having thus fulfilled my mission (I fear at some cost to your good father, my impetuosity being greatly augmented by the recent rains), I will at once withdraw, merely adding that I have taken the liberty of leaving a brace of very fine carp on the drawing-room sofa, and a salmon, fresh run, in the very best condition, on your father's study chair. The boat-house, I fear, is on its way to the ocean, beyond my powers of recal; but I am mistaken if some remarkably fine eels will not be found in the spot vacated by that edifice. Good-night."

The form seemed to melt away, and mingle with the retiring waters, which, long before day, had returned to their natural channel, and I could have imagined the whole a dream, but for the wreath, the frightful cold I caught at the window, and the fish, which, as the Ripple had mentioned, were found flapping about in the places described.

The damage done will be repaired, papa thinks, for about two hundred pounds, which is more than my wreath, lovely as it is, would have cost, if sent by the Parcels Delivery Company. But no matter.

Your ever affectionate

ELLA.

P.S.—I have not told you all the Ripple's message. That I reserve till we meet.

Lives there the man with soul so dead to all the simpler forms of melody, who does not know The Legacy; who, if a flutist, has not tootled it, in earlier days, until himself was satiated, his friends disgusted, with the strain? Yet it is a pretty thing—a touching conceit. Only when we apply the test of fact and practice, does its rich absurdity come out in full force.

What friend, however attached to the testator, but would experience some embarrassment, if, in his executorial capacity, it fell to his lot to wait upon a young lady, carrying under his arm a jar, neatly packed

and ticketed, and address her in the following words. It may be as well first to quote the poem :

When in death I shall calm recline,
O bear my heart to my mistress dear.
Tall her it lived on her smiles divine,
Of brightest hue while it lingered here.
Bid her not shed one tear of sorrow,
To sully those cheeks so blooming and bright,
But ruddier drops from the red grape borrow,
To bathe the relic from morn to night.

Prose translation :

"It is my melancholy duty, my dear Miss Picklethwayte, to place in your hands this—this—preparation—once representing the vital principle of my late most estimable friend, Mr. Adolphus Allsup, Putney Lower Common.

"It was sustained—poor Allsup charged me to observe—chiefly, if not exclusively, by certain facial gestures of yours in which he took singular pleasure.

"I am to request you, my dear young lady, not to shed tears, since such could not fail to be unbecoming to a countenance so fair, but to adopt the more practical course of plunging this very interesting relic in wine, obtained merely as a loan ('borrow' is the word in the will) from red grapes, and to repeat the process, from dawn till sunset, for an indefinite period. Shall I—on the sideboard? Thanks. Good mornning."

It is chiefly in the matter of chorus that British invention seems to falter. All connexion with the ballad proper is too frequently let go, and a jumble of unmeaning words substituted. Surely that is bad musical policy. The essence of a chorus is its heartiness, and who, let us ask, could join, with anything approaching to enthusiasm, in such a refrain as that which we find appended to a touching lyric by Mr. Henry Walker, once very popular as the Seven Dials Tragedy :

With his diddle de dump de di de do,
His diddle de dump de day,
His diddle de dump de di de do,
Diddle de dump de day.

This may mean much, but it expresses so little, that we are quite content the stanza should remain, as it is stated to be, peculiarly "his," his alone.

There is, however, a mystery, connected with these "his's," taken in the gross, which needs elucidation. We can submit to be brought round to it with ease and gentleness, as in Jack Sheppard's celebrated ditty. "With his chisel so fine, tra la," is an apt and lucid corollary of the foregoing verse. But there

is impertinence, not to say offence, in the exclusively assigning any part of a melody, in which all have been invited to share, to an anonymous "him," of whose claims we have learned nothing. Why should this mysterious stranger be invested with an especial "tooral-ooral?" What title can he urge to a personal and particular "ri-fol-de-ril-de-rol-de-ray?" In another refrain with which we have occasionally met: "With his

Whack fal lal de ral,
Whack fal lal de rido,
Whack fal lal de ral,
Whack fal lal de rido,"

there is a certain rollicking, not to say Irish, lilt, in which one would really be disposed to join, but for the intrusive "with his," which introduces it. Once more we demand, who is "he?" And wherefore should the whacks, as well as the ridos, be especially his?

With infinitely better taste, the author of Billy O'Rourke permits to his chorus a full participation in whatsoever of delight, or profit, may be comprehended in a Killy-ma-crae.

With my Killy-ma-crae, no heart more true
For Billy O'Rourke in the boughil.

Nay, an instance, unfortunately almost exceptional, occurs to us, in which a direct recognition of ownership is conceded :

With your rum-ti-iddity-ido.

Still it would be more gratifying if the nature of the property were more distinctly defined. What is a rum-ti-iddity-ido? For aught we know it may be a youthful hippopotamus! But, then, if I really had one, shouldn't I know it? Is it pretty? Is it expensive? Can it walk? Do I return it in my tax-paper? Can it be that the payers of "conscience money" to the exchequer adopt that mode of liquidating the claims of the state upon them for an unexpected rum-ti-iddity-ido? Do I lock up mine when leaving the house? Or, when visiting my club, does my rum-ti-iddity-ido accompany me, and remain in the strangers' room; or (with my goloshes) in the hall? There is something startling in finding oneself in possession of a weird, uncanny thing, of whose very existence we were unaware until the ballad revealed and assigned it to us as property. Goodness help us! How long have I had a rum-ti-iddity-ido?

Lord Soulis he sat in Hermitage Castle,
And beside him Redcap sly.

And, thus, I am sensible of a certain grotesque presence hovering about me even

as I write, criticising my expressions, and grinning spitefully over my bewildered description of itself. Could I, peradventure (the thought is sudden) sell this doubtful thing? Would the Times accept my quiet advertisement: "To be sold, a great bargain, in the finest condition—in fact, as good as new—a first-class RUM-TI-IDDITY-IDO. No trial allowed. Apply, &c."?

But, absurd as nonsense, pure and simple, may appear, it is really preferable to sense misused. Witness the chorus of that time-dishonoured stave, *We won't go Home till Morning*, degraded from an exulting song of victory to the glorification of some booby, whose chief title to the honour is having stuffed a knot of other boobies with more dinner than is good for them, followed by more wine than their wits can away with. For what earthly reason should honest sober folk be roused from needful rest, to be informed that Mr. Robert Caddywould, or Mr. Anthony Cheeper, is esteemed a jolly good fellow, to have that fact pressed upon us with an insistence that at once awakens a suspicion to the contrary, and by no means to be removed by the dictatorial, "So say all of us," as if the verdict of a group of persons, reduced by drink to a condition of semi-idiotcy, must necessarily be without appeal. Wherefore should this insane bellow, long since in its dotage, and at no time possessed of one atom of the wit and epigram that give grace to the drinking songs of other lands, be still occasionally heard in the streets and dining-rooms of polished London?

I have changed my purpose. While this chant survives, I will not part with a single *fal-lal-la*, *tooral-ooral*, or *dump-de-day*, far less my *rum-ti-iddity-ido*!

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXI. PEACHUM AND LOCKIT.

THE fever which had attacked Mr. Doughty had settled on his lungs, oppressing him with a terrible weight and causing him serious exhaustion. For many days he supported a terrible struggle with death. It was presently known that his senses had returned, but that there was but little hope of his surviving. And there was much regret in Brickford when this became known, as he was charitable and generous. Desperate remedies had to be resorted to, to reduce the inflammation. The patient had but

little strength, but began to grow more and more conscious and self-possessed.

Mr. Nagle found himself at the house as soon as this change became known.

"I presume, sir," he said, haughtily, to the doctor, "you will not oppose my seeing my friend at this crisis."

"On the contrary," said the doctor. "I was going to send for you, as the sight of a familiar face will have a good effect."

"Familiar, indeed," snorted the music-master, "and before you sent one of your pill-boxes into the place. Take care, sir, you are not hoisted on your own petard. I find it difficult to avoid resenting your conduct."

"I had no intention of offending, I assure you," said the other, carelessly; "but come to him now, and speak, I beg of you, in a low voice."

This tone of direction grated on Mr. Nagle, but he felt restrained by what he called the "sanctity of the sick-bed," and said nothing. By-and-bye his time would come, that is, "should the man recover"—a favourite phrase of his—and then he would see.

Greatly changed, and greatly wasted, the figure of the prostrate Mr. Doughty was presented to them. He was scarcely able to speak above a whisper. His eyes lighted up at the sight of his friend, as, indeed, Mr. Nagle noticed, though he did not perceive that it was the association with Corinna that produced this effect. He squeezed Mr. Nagle's hand, and that gentleman was delighted to hear him whisper, "You must not desert me. Promise me—I have much to say to you."

"Never, never," said Mr. Nagle, returning the squeeze with fervency. "You may depend on me." He gave a triumphant glance at the physician, who responded cordially.

"Mr. Nagle is indispensable," he said, "and has been most assiduous in watching over you through the crisis. But you must not talk too much. By-and-bye you can do that." And he gently withdrew Mr. Nagle from the room.

"Now you will understand," he said to him outside, "though you put a wrong construction on the step I was obliged to take yesterday. We must go quietly, and not too fast. And the great point is to protect him from the well-meant irruption of visitors and others."

"I quite understand," said Mr. Nagle with renewed fervour. "The relations are so pushing. They seem to have no decancy.

They must be kept out at all hazards. We might divide the duty—take it in watches. I would keep guard when you have to go away; you would relieve me, and so on."

"Oh, that's a very serious way of taking it," said the other, coldly. "We don't want to keep guard exactly. People would naturally think you had some interested designs. No, I shall take care that he shall not be disturbed; and I can depend on my sister in my absence. But as I said, the effect of your name and presence occasionally—and I need not tell you why—will be most valuable."

Again Mr. Nagle felt that he did not like this man. There was an air of authority and patronage he did not relish; yet he did not know how to encounter him, or set him down. He was disturbed, and put out, and went his way home feeling rather helpless, and muttering often that something must be done.

CHAPTER XXXII. LADY DUKE IN COUNCIL.

OF all the little band of conspirators—if that be not an inappropriate term for persons who were seeking to carry out their own ends, independently of each other—Lady Duke was the most experienced and skilful. She was a woman of the world, was in a higher sphere of life than the others, and had, besides, been tolerably successful in several schemes, which presented far greater difficulties than the one now on hand. A great deal, too, was in her favour. She had a certain rank and position, and her intelligence showed her at once that the key of the whole fortress was Doctor Spooner. That Malakoff would have to be gained, not by assault, but by stratagem. Accordingly, when it was known that the patient was sensible, she determined, without loss of time, to make a private advance on the fortification which had been assailed in concert so fruitlessly a few days before. "Doughty has made no will, I am convinced. What then can this man's game be? He can do nothing but obstruct, and cannot hope to get much for himself. The other may die before making a will, or before he has strength enough to make one. If the man recovers, his whole trouble is wasted. If he had any cleverness his real game would be to co-operate with the heirs, or one of the heirs, and make an arrangement with them." Lady Duke did not actually utter these words, but the ideas passed through her mind again and again. "If he be the shrewd creature they call him," she

said, "this must have occurred to him long ago. From the Nagles he will get nothing, as they are jealous of him."

As these thoughts were passing through her mind, the servant came to announce that Doctor Spooner wished to see her. The lady smiled, as though some one had paid a tribute to her knowledge of human character.

"It is very kind of you, Doctor Spooner, to come and relieve my anxiety. Sit down," she added, in her most confidential style, "and tell me all about the poor patient."

"You have heard, I suppose, that he is sensible, and so far improving; but still he is in the most critical way."

"Of course," said she. "It is wonderful how you have brought him over it so far."

"I can take very little credit in the matter beyond that of"—and he hesitated—"that of guarding him carefully from all disturbing influences which would have been fatal. I have supported him in the water, as I may say; but the question now is to restore animation, and even life."

"Of course you only did your duty. At least I understood it that way."

"Quite so. But now begins the serious difficulty. I come to tell you that I almost feel myself unequal to what I see is before me. How am I to take on myself the duty of resisting the pressure that will now be put on me? There are so many well-meaning, pressing persons, who are undoubtedly more entitled than I am to assume authority by his bedside—they will override me, that I can foresee. But it will be my duty to oppose them, and that will place me in a position of great delicacy and difficulty."

"I am sure," said Lady Duke, haughtily, "as far as I am concerned nothing of the kind can be said of me. This very day, I will venture to say, you have been invaded by the whole tribe of Nagles, Gardiners, and the rest. I was determined not to go near the place after the scene of the other day, though I sent my servant to inquire."

The doctor bowed.

"Nothing more lady-like or becoming could be conceived than your conduct. And for that very reason I am here now. From your position and rank, I consider you the head of the relations, and the person whom I ought to consult in this matter. The position—my position—as I said before, is becoming very delicate, and I think it is not right that all the responsibility should be cast on me. May I speak frankly and in confidence?"

Lady Duke bowed to him to go on.

"It is no secret here that these Nagles have an extraordinary influence over him. What the foundation of that influence is, you know as well as I do. Now I have reason to believe that they intend to exert that influence presently, in a way that may have most serious results. I understand he has not as yet made any will disposing of his vast property."

At the mention of this word "will," Lady Duke gave a very perceptible start.

"A desperate attempt will be made to induce him to make one, even in his present state. The girl will be introduced. They have tried to do so already, but I have opposed them unflinchingly and with success. From their persistency in this matter, I believe they have not got him to sign anything as yet; but he is under some infatuation as to her, and he certainly has, or will have in a day or two, sufficient glimmer of intelligence to make it extremely difficult to upset such a deed. If I were called as a witness, I would not take on myself to swear that he is incapable of understanding what he was about. But there can be no doubt that, at this moment, he is physically unable to deal with such matters, and that the agitation and excitement would perhaps kill him."

"Then," said Lady Duke, hurriedly, "why hesitate a moment? It must be prevented at all risks."

"But how," said the other, quietly; "you see there is the difficulty. An indecent brawl, not at his door, as we had the other day, but round his bed—that would be the only result. What would you do? What would you authorise me to do?"

"Why, I should say," answered she, readily, "that it was a fair case for discretion—and quiet temporising. As you say, another such scene as that of the other day, would be fatal."

"It would not be so difficult to exclude these Nagles altogether; but then, you see, the agitation——"

"Not to be thought of," she said; "they should be met with their own weapons."

"So I think," he said, "for the sake of the patient himself. Your taking this view encourages me, Lady Duke."

"But as to his state, do you think he will recover?"

"We must all hope so," he said, with a curious look; "if so you will have simply done your duty, and these people will be more firmly established than ever.

They will not, of course, forgive this treatment, but that can't be helped. If, on the other hand, there should be a fatal termination, he will not have been made the prey of comparative strangers, and his relations will, as is only right, not be stripped of their due inheritance."

Lady Duke reflected a moment.

"This is very honourable and creditable on your part; but I do not see how you are to be recompensed for so great a service."

"You are quite right. In whatever way the matter is looked at, it will be seen that nothing can come to me. That rather shabby reward, 'the consciousness of having done one's duty,' is all that I can reasonably look for."

"Then what motive——" said Lady Duke abruptly, "I mean, why should you travel out of your professional course and give yourself so much trouble for nothing?"

He smiled. "You clearly have not much faith in human morality, or in the consciousness of having done one's duty as a satisfactory reward. If," he continued, slowly, "I were to set aside the general interest of the relations, which, as you say, I am not bound to look after particularly, and were to look more to an individual interest, that would make a great difference. I am struggling at a poor profession, and own I should not be above a substantial acknowledgment—not, observe, for any underground proceeding, but for legitimate service; that is, for preventing an indecent scramble among those who are related by blood, and for securing to those who, by their position and rank, are entitled to represent the family, the succession to this inheritance."

Doctor Spooner paused. He saw the fire of avarice in her eyes. She was eager. He had not made a mistake.

"But how—how is it to be managed?"

"By me," he said, "with your assistance. You see this is no combination, as it might vulgarly be considered. We wish merely to defeat the discreditable attempts of others."

"Oh, that I see perfectly," said Lady Duke. "We are for the interests of the deceased—I mean," she said, colouring, "of our patient. It is a proper proceeding; not a word could be said against it. But, of course, the person who brought about such a consummation would look for an exorbitant recompense?"

This she said in an interrogative way. Doctor Spooner answered carelessly:

"That will arise by-and-bye, when the part of the work done shall be an earnest for what is to come. The reward must, of course, be substantial. But the prize is worth it. Neither must it be left to good feeling or generosity, which only produces misconception."

Lady Duke drew up haughtily.

"Oh, I can enter into no bargain of the kind. That is too dangerous a business."

"I do not ask you," he said. "By-and-bye you will be pressing and asking me. It will be all left to your own choice. You will move in the matter, Lady Duke, never fear. This is merely a little preliminary interchange of ideas. Meanwhile, I have come to you to ask advice. Now I must return to the—I must not say deceased, as you did, Lady Duke—but to my patient."

"I am glad we have come to this wise understanding. It will contribute largely to his benefit."

On this Doctor Spooner took his leave.

Lady Duke sat after his departure full of thought, her eyes resting on her table, which was covered with some very forcible stimulants to action, in the shape of bills, and letters pressing for payment of the bills. The family, indeed, was in such a situation, that a crisis was not very far off. Her son had been found perfectly useless as a resource, though something might be done with him later; there was still less to be hoped for from her daughter, who might as well be sent back to the finishing school—only the "lady principal's" letters were the most pressing in the heap of applications on the table. All, therefore, lay with herself; scruples were a luxury she could not indulge in at such a crisis. Money must be had; the family credit of the Dukes must be saved at all risks; and the money of this poor sick Doughty must be left to her. In a very few minutes she had two or three plans of action before her, and she determined not to lose a moment in trying the first.

CHAPTER XXXIII. LADY DUKE'S MOVE.

THE music-master's daughter, now the heroine of Brickford, was no romantic dreamer, dwelling on her own sufferings with a soft complacency and satisfaction, but was determined to carry out the scheme she had announced. There was in her mind, too, a lofty purpose of self-chastisement—a calm resolve to suffer a stern penalty for the light trifling, for the careless encouragement with which she

had brought suffering on two persons who loved her. Not that she had now even a remnant of regard or toleration for the young gentleman, whose abrupt departure had made her the object of the smiles, and, perhaps, pity of the town. This odd fashion of withdrawal had revealed to her the cowardice and selfishness of her late admirer, who felt too guilty or too timorous even to explain the reasons for his abandonment of her, and chose to skulk off in a way that was cheapest, and would cause him least trouble and annoyance. It was all over, therefore, with that episode, and she could look back on it with perfect calmness. As for the patient who was lying stricken with sickness, and whose noble devotion to her was being revealed to her more and more as she looked back on all that had occurred, her impulse would have been to have flown to his side, to have watched over and tended him. "What would be said in Brickford" as to such a proceeding would have been only a challenge to her to carry it out with defiance, and she would feel a joyful pride in provoking their most spiteful criticisms. Nay, she would have welcomed them. But she felt that she had deserved punishment, and in a stern self-denial and self-sacrifice was resolved to find it. Out on the world, therefore, she would face the practical difficulties of life, and in working her way to success, and perhaps triumph, would leave the romance of life behind her, and never look back. With this resolve she was quietly preparing for her journey, when she was told that Lady Duke wished to see her, and was waiting in the drawing-room.

Corinna went down at once. The woman of the world looked at her curiously, and then began a sort of apology for her son's behaviour.

"I frankly tell you," she said, "that I never approved of the business from the beginning, both for your sake and for his. He is a changeable creature, and I told him he had no right to amuse himself with a mere passing flirtation, at the expense of——"

"If it be for this that you have come to me," said Corinna, haughtily, "I beg that you will not say anything more on the subject. I can assure you it has given me no distress or uneasiness whatever."

"It delights me to hear you say so," said the lady. "I knew you would look at the matter in its proper light. Young men will be young men, as we all know."

"That is another view," said Corinna. "Though if the matter were to be judged seriously, I do not think it could be dismissed so lightly as you suppose. I am glad you are here, that you may know that I had no feeling for your son beyond being flattered at the attention with which he was pleased to distinguish me. You must allow for my situation—a poor music-master's daughter. Let us say no more on the subject, if you please."

"With all my heart. Still, you see, I was not so far out in my judgment. You were naturally affected by the very marked partiality shown to you in another quarter. Of course I have no scruple in alluding to this. Mr. Doughty's attachment was evident to every one, and the talk of Brickford."

Corinna looked at the lady of quality steadily, and, after a pause, said, calmly:

"Is this the subject you have come to speak to me on?"

A little embarrassed, Lady Duke replied:

"Why, no. I tell you frankly I came for some news as to Mr. Doughty's state. Your father being *ami de la maison*, and no one else being admitted, I suppose for all proper reasons, I came to the fountain head. You are said to be acting like a perfect sister of charity, and but for you it is believed he would never have got over the crisis."

"I have never seen him once since he was taken ill," said Corinna.

"Never once?" said Lady Duke, scanning her narrowly.

"Never," said Corinna. "So much for the value of the reports that you have heard."

"What gossips there are in this place," said Lady Duke, in well-feigned surprise. "There is no end to the stories. He worships you with a sort of dotage. And, indeed, it is supposed that you are to get all his money, for the poor dear sick creature can't be with us very long."

Every word of this cruel speech was a stab to Corinna, sharp stroke after stroke. Her relation to Mr. Doughty, and what was repeated about the place on the sub-

ject, had of course been present to her clear eye, but until that moment it had never assumed such a bold and even hideous shape. The picture that Lady Duke suggested almost scared her.

After a moment's pause she said, in a voice which she tried should appear steady, and fixing her eyes on Lady Duke:

"I think I appreciate the motive that has brought you here to tell me this. I may say that I know it."

The woman of the world grew uncomfortable under that steady gaze, and felt more guilty than she had done for many years.

"But it does not touch me. No; not in the least. If I cared for your opinion, I would know that you are paying me a sort of compliment; for you know well what is the intended effect of what you have just said. But you might have spared me, and spared yourself, the humiliation. I had determined to quit this place before you came in. I leave it to-morrow."

Lady Duke gave a genuine start of surprise.

"I am not flying from ill-nature. If I chose to be insensible, I would prefer to stay, and let you find out, and feel, what power I have. But what I cannot endure is—— But no matter, I go. There is my trunk, packed and corded, as you may tell your friends in Brickford."

Lady Duke was utterly crushed; her pleasure at the withdrawal of such a dangerous rival being overpowered in her wonder at what "the girl could be at." She could only rise and murmur:

"It is really wonderful, and shows a very proper feeling. It is quite Spartan of you, and indeed I always will say that you have behaved admirably all through the affair."

So she determined that she would say, of course, to the patient, or to those likely to repeat her speech to the patient. Treading on air, as the phrase goes, and full of exaltation, she took her leave; and almost before she reached the street the veteran schemer had a new plan ready, which she prepared to execute at once, and set off straight to Mr. Doughty's house.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 225. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER LIII. ONE MORE CHANCE.

SIR HARRY came home, and met me more affectionately and kindly than ever. I soon perceived that there was something of more than usual gravity under discussion between him and Mr. Blount. I knew, of course, very well what was the question they were debating.

I was very uncomfortable while this matter was being discussed; Mr. Blount seemed nervous and uneasy; and it was plain that the decision was not only suspended but uncertain. I don't suppose there was a more perturbed little family in all England at that moment over whom, at the same time, there hung apparently no cloud of disaster.

At last I could perceive that something was settled; for the discussions between Mr. Blount and Sir Harry seemed to have lost the character of debate and remonstrance, and to have become more like a gloomy confidence and consultation between them. I can only speak of what I may call the external appearance of these conversations, for I was not permitted to hear one word of their substance.

In a little while Sir Harry went away again.

This time his journey, I afterwards learned, was to one of the quietest little towns in North Wales, where his chaise drew up at the Bull Inn.

The tall northern baronet got out of the chaise, and strode to the bar of that rural hostelry.

"Is there a gentleman named Marston staying here?" he asked of the plump

elderly lady who sat within the bow-window of the bar.

"Yes, sir, Mr. Marston, Number Seven, up one pair of stairs."

"Up-stairs now?" asked Sir Harry.

"He'll be gone out to take his walk, sir, by this time," answered the lady.

"Can I talk to you for a few minutes, anywhere, madam, in private?" asked Sir Harry.

The old lady looked at him, a little surprised.

"Yes, sir," she said. "Is it anything very particular, please?"

"Yes, ma'am, very particular," answered the baronet.

She called to her handmaid, and installed her quickly in her seat, and so led the baronet to an unoccupied room on the ground floor. Sir Harry closed the door and told her who he was. The landlady recognised his baronetage with a little courtesy.

"I'm a relation of Mr. Marston, and I have come down here to make an inquiry; I want to know whether he has been leading an orderly, quiet life since he came to your house."

"No one more so, please, sir; a very nice regular gentleman, and goes to church every Sunday he's been here, and that is true. We have no complaint to make of him, please, sir, and he has paid his bill twice since he came."

The woman looked honest, with frank, round eyes.

"Thank you, ma'am," said Sir Harry; "that will do."

An hour later it was twilight, and Mr. Marston, on entering his sitting-room after his walk, saw the baronet, who got up from his chair before the fire as he came in.

The young man instantly took off his

hat, and stood near the door, the very image of humility. Sir Harry did not advance, or offer him his hand; he gave him a nod. Nothing could be colder than this reception.

"So, Richard, you have returned to England, as you have done most other things, without consulting me," said the cold deep voice of Sir Harry.

"I've acted rashly, sir, I fear. I acted on an impulse. I could not resist it. It was only twelve hours before the ship left New York when the thought struck me I ought to have waited. I ought to have thought it over. It seemed to me my only chance, and I'm afraid it has but sunk me lower in your esteem."

"It is clear you should have asked my leave first, all things considered," said Sir Harry, in the same tone.

The young man bowed his head.

"I see that very clearly now, sir; but I have been so miserable under your displeasure, and I do not always see things as my calmer reason would view them. I thought of nothing but my chance of obtaining your forgiveness, and, at so great a distance, I despaired."

"So it was to please me you set my authority at naught? By Jen! that's logic."

Sir Harry spoke this with a scornful and angry smile.

"I am the only near kinsman you have left, sir, of your blood and name."

"My name, sir!" challenged Sir Harry, fiercely.

"My second name is Rokestone—called after you," pleaded Mr. Marston.

"By my sang, young man, if you and I had borne the same name, I'd have got the Queen's letter, and changed mine to Smith."

To this the young gentleman made no reply. His uncle broke the silence that followed.

"We'll talk at present, if you please, as little as need be; there's nothing pleasant to say between us. But I'll give you a chance; I'll see if you are a changed man, as your letter says. I'll try what work is in you, for what good. You said you'd like farming. Well, we'll see what sort of farmer you'll make. You'll do well to remember 'tis but a trial. In two or three days Mr. Blount will give you particulars by letter. Good evening. Don't come down; stay here. I'll go alone. Say no more; I'll have no thanks or professions. Your conduct, steadiness, integrity, shall guide me. That's all. Farewell."

Mr. Marston, during this colloquy, had gradually advanced a little, and now stood near the window. Sir Harry accompanied his farewell with a short nod, and stalked down the stairs. Mr. Marston knew he meant what he said, and therefore did not attempt to accompany him down-stairs. And so, with a fresh pair of horses, Sir Harry immediately started on his homeward journey.

I, who knew at the time nothing of what I afterwards learned, was still in a suspense which nobody suspected. It was ended one evening by Sir Harry Rokestone, who said:

"To-morrow my nephew, Richard Marston, will be here to stay, I have not yet determined for how long. He is a dull young man. You'll not like him; he has not a word to throw at a dog."

So, whatever his description was worth, his announcement was conclusive, and Richard Marston was to become an inmate of Dorracleugh next day.

I find my diary says, under date of the next day:

"I have been looking forward, with a trepidation I can hardly account for, to the arrival which Sir Harry announced yesterday. The event of the day occurred at three o'clock. I was thinking of going out for a walk, and had my hat and jacket on, and was standing in the hall. I wished to postpone, as long as I could, the meeting with Mr. Marston, which I dreaded. At that critical moment his double knock at the hall-door, and the distant peal of our rather deep-mouthed bell, startled me. I guessed it was he, and turned to run up to my room, but met Sir Harry, who said, laying his hand gently on my shoulder:

"Wait, dear; this is my nephew. I saw him from the window. I want to introduce him."

"Of course I had to submit. The door was opened. There he was, the veritable Mr. Marston, of Malory, the hero of the Conway Castle, of the duel, and likewise of so many evil stories—the man who had once talked so romantically and so madly to me.

"I felt myself growing pale, and then blushing. Sir Harry received him coldly enough, and introduced me, simply mentioning my name and his; and then I ran down the steps, with two of the dogs as my companions, while the servants were getting in Mr. Marston's luggage.

"I met him again at dinner. He is very

little changed, except that he is much more sun-burnt. He has got a look, too, of command and melancholy. I am sure he has suffered, and suffering, they say, makes people better. He talked very little during dinner, and rather justified Sir Harry's description. Sir Harry talked about the farm he intends for him; they are to look at it to-morrow together. Mr. Blount seems to have got a load off his mind.

"The farm is not so far away as I had imagined. It is only at the other side of the lake, about five hundred acres at Clusted, which came to Sir Harry, Mr. Blount says, through the Mardykes family. I wonder whether there is a house upon it; if so, he will probably live at the other side of the lake, and his arrival will have made very little difference to us. So much the better, perhaps.

"I saw him and Sir Harry, at about eight o'clock this morning, set out together in the big boat, with two men, to cross the lake.

"Farming is, I believe, a very absorbing pursuit. He won't feel his solitude much, and Mr. Blount says he will have to go to fairs and markets. It is altogether a grazing farm."

The reader will perceive that I am still quoting my diary.

"To-day old Miss Goulding, of Wrybiggins, the old lady whom the gossips of Golden Friars once assigned to Sir Harry as a wife, called with a niece who is with her on a visit; so I suppose they had heard of Mr. Marston's arrival, and came to see what kind of person he is. I'm rather glad they were disappointed. I ordered luncheon for them, and I saw them look toward the door every time it opened, expecting, I am sure, to see Mr. Marston. I maliciously postponed telling them, until the very last moment, that he was at the other side of the mere, as they call the lake, although I suffered for my cruelty, or they dawdled on here almost interminably.

"Sir Harry and Mr. Marston did not return till tea-time, when it was quite dark; they had dined at a farm-house at the other side.

"Sir Harry seems, I think, a little more friendly with him. They talked, it is true, of nothing but farming and live stock, and Mr. Blount joined. I took, therefore, my solitude, to my piano, and, when I was tired of that, to my novel.

"A very dull evening, the dullest, I think, I've passed since we came to

Dorracleugh. I dare say Mr. Marston will make a very good farmer. I hope very much there may be a suitable residence found for him at the other side of the lake."

Next day my diary contains the following entry:

"Mr. Marston off again at eight o'clock to his farm. Mr. Blount and I took a sail to-day, with Sir Harry's leave, in the small boat. He tells me that there is no necessity for Mr. Marston's going every day to the farm; that Sir Harry has promised him a third of whatever the farm, under his management, makes. He seems very anxious to please Sir Harry. I can't conceive what can have made me so nervous about the arrival of this very humdrum squire, whose sole object appears to be the prosperity of his colony of cows and sheep.

"Sunday.—Of course to-day he has taken a holiday, but he has not given us the benefit of it. He chose to walk all day, instead of going to church with us to Golden Friars. It is not far from Haworth. So he prefers a march of four and twenty miles to the fatigue of our society!"

On the Tuesday following I find, by the same record, Sir Harry went to visit his estate of Tarlton, about forty miles from Golden Friars, to remain away for three or four days.

That day, I find also, Mr. Marston was, as usual, at his farm at Olusted, and did not come home till about nine o'clock.

I went to my room immediately after his arrival, so that he had an uninterrupted tête-à-tête with Mr. Blount.

Next day he went away at his usual early hour, and returned not so late. I made an excuse of having some letters to write, and left the two gentlemen to themselves a good deal earlier than the night before.

"Mr. Marston certainly is very little in my way; I have not spoken twenty words to him since his arrival. I begin to think him extremely impertinent."

The foregoing is a very brief note of the day, considering how diffuse and particular I often was when we were more alone. I make up for it on the following day. The text runs thus:

"Mr. Marston has come off his high horse, and broken silence at last. It was blowing furiously in the morning, and I suppose, however melancholy he may be, he has no intention of drowning himself. At all events there has been no crossing the mere this morning.

"He has appeared, for the first time since his arrival, at breakfast. Sir Harry's absence seems to have removed a great constraint. He talked very agreeably, and seemed totally to have forgotten the subject of farming; he told us a great deal of his semi-military life in Spain, which was very amusing. I know he made me laugh heartily. Old Mr. Blount laughed also. Our breakfast was a very pleasant meal. Mr. Blount was himself in Spain for more than a year when he was young, and got up and gave us a representation of his host, an eccentric fan-maker, walking with his toes pointed and his chest thrown out, and speaking sonorous Spanish with pompous gesture. I had no idea he had so much fun in him. The good-natured old man seemed quite elated at our applause and very real laughter.

"Mr. Marston suddenly looked across the lake, and recollected his farm.

"How suddenly that storm went down," he said. "I can't say I'm glad of it, for I suppose I must make my usual trip, and visit my four-footed friends over the way."

"No," said Mr. Blount; "let them shift for themselves to-day; I'll take it on myself. There's no necessity for you going every day as you do."

"But how will it be received by the authorities? Will my uncle think it an omission? I should not like him to suppose that, under any temptation, I had forgotten my understanding with him."

"He glanced at me. Whether he thought me the temptation, or only wished to include me in the question, I don't know.

"Oh, no," said Mr. Blount; "stay at home for this once; I'll explain it all; and we can go out and have a sail, if the day continues as fine as it promises."

"Mr. Marston hesitated; he looked at me as if for an opinion, but I said nothing.

"Well," he said, "I can't resist; I'll take your advice, Mr. Blount, and make this a holiday."

"I think Mr. Marston very much improved in some respects. His manners and conversation are not less spirited, but gentler; and he is so very agreeable. I think he has lead an unhappy life, and no doubt was often very much in the wrong. But I have remarked that we condemn people not in proportion to their moral guilt, but in proportion to the inconvenience their faults inflict on us. I wonder very much what those stories were which caused Mr. Carmel and Laura Gray to speak of him so bitterly and sternly. They were both

so good that things which other people would have thought lightly enough of would seem to them enormous. I dare say it is all about debt, or very likely play; and people who have possibly lost money by his extravagance have been exaggerating matters, and telling stories their own way. He seems very much sobered now, at all events. One can't help pitying him.

"He went down to the jetty before luncheon. I found afterwards that it was to get cloaks and rugs arranged for me.

"He lunched with us, and we were all very talkative. He certainly will prevent our all falling asleep in this drowsy place. We had such a pleasant sail. I gave him the tiller; but his duties as helmsman did not prevent his talking. We could hear one another very well, in spite of the breeze, which was rather more than Sir Harry would have quite approved of.

"Mr. Marston had many opportunities to-day of talking to me without any risk of being overheard. He did not, however, say a single word in his old vein. I am very glad of this; it would be provoking to lose his conversation, which is amusing, and, I confess, a great resource in this solitude.

"He is always on the watch to find if I want anything, and gets or does it instantly. I wish his farm was at this side of the lake. I dare say when Sir Harry comes back we shall see as little as ever of him: It will end by his being drowned in that dangerous lake. It seems odd that Sir Harry, who is so tender of my life and Mr. Blount's, should have apparently no feeling whatever about his. But it is their affair. I'm not likely to be consulted; so I need not trouble my head about it.

"I write in my room, the day now over, and dear old Rebecca Torkill is fussing about from table to wardrobe, and from wardrobe to drawers, pottering, and fidgeting, and whispering to herself. She has just told me that Mrs. Shackleton, the housekeeper here at Dorracleugh, talked to her a good deal this evening about Mr. Marston. She gives a very good account of him. When he went to school, and to Oxford, she saw him only at intervals, but he was a manly, good-natured boy she said, 'and never, that she knew, any harm in him, only a bit wild, like other young men at such places.' I write, as nearly as I can, Rebecca's words.

"The subject of the quarrel with Sir Harry Rokestone, Mrs. Shackleton says, was simply that Mr. Marston positively

refused to marry some one whom his uncle had selected for a niece-in-law. That is exactly the kind of disobedience that old people are sometimes most severe upon. She told Rebecca to be very careful not to say a word of it to the other servants, as it was a great secret.

"After all there may be two sides to this case, as to others, and Mr. Marston's chief mutiny may have been of that kind which writers of romance and tragedy elevate into heroism.

"He certainly is very much improved."

Here my diary for that day left Mr. Marston, and turned to half a dozen trifles, treated, I must admit, with much comparative brevity.

A DAY IN A LONDON HOSPITAL.

LAST night, just twelve hours ago, I was on this same Thames Embankment, and on this same spot, with the large luminous eye of the Clock Tower watching me as I stood staring, through the blind blue fog, at the black lumps of coal barges stealing along under the arches of Waterloo Bridge, and at the Southwark streets gradually melting away into the cold and thickening darkness; and now, what a change! Here I am, bold and blithe, dashing along, in a gallant hansom, rattling away at any number of miles an hour, and the yellow wheels revolving at such a rate that, to a passer-by, they must seem like two solid yellow circles. It is a bright, crisp, frosty morning, and the horse's hoofs ring out and make pleasant music on the hard macadam. The luminous orange eye of last night has grown white and opaque, and I no longer feel like a lurking criminal, with a policeman's lantern turned steadily on me.

And yet ought I not to be ashamed of myself, to be so brisk and cheerful, when I am on my way to a house of suffering—a place of wretchedness—where men and women are this very moment dying, where suffering of every kind is groaning out prayers for release, and where surgeons are grinding dreadful-looking knives of strange unearthly shapes to prune and pare bodies, hoping by such tribute to Death to save the residue a little longer? Luckily for us, man is often able to cast behind him painful thoughts, and, full of the pleasure of mere living, I keep before my mind this morning only pleasant thoughts of the ceaseless good wrought by such beneficent charities as I am about to visit; I choose

to see only crowds of parents restored to their children, and wives restored to their husbands, and ignore, for the present at least, curtained beds, dying people over whom doctors shake their heads, the dead-house, and the dismal funeral procession. It is hard enough to look on the bright side of some London scenes; here at least the bright side was obvious enough.

That angels stand sentry at such gates as those I now enter, I for one believe, and that Love, Charity, Mercy, and Self-denial are those angels' names, I most undoubtingly hold, although those white-winged spirits who ceaselessly ascend to heaven with prayers from such places, to descend with blessings, were, I confess, not visible to the eye as I paid my cabman at the south-east entrance of St. Thomas's Hospital.

I was to meet that clever and enthusiastic student friend of mine, Frank Forcep, at ten, and the clock in the hall wanted three black spots to that hour as I asked for him at the porter's glass room to the left, tapping at a window studded with students' letters, as a tavern's is with commercial travellers' correspondence. Forcep prides himself on being of chronometrical exactness; I am therefore not surprised to hear that he had arrived five minutes before, and had gone up into the Victoria Ward to see a special case. The porter affably expects that he will soon be down; and there is something in the porter's manner that implies he has already set down Forcep in his mental note-book as a steady, hard-working student, with no nonsense about him, and safe to rise high in his profession. I become a blind believer in Forcep's punctuality, and in very truth, just as I have read through an announcement of a foot-ball meeting—St. Thomas's versus St. George's—which will no doubt provide several interesting cases of broken legs for zealous students, I hear smart, quick steps across the hall, and enter Forcep on the scene. He wears the intent look of a man who has been observing, and has the manner of one still partly absorbed in deep thoughts and new combinations. He greets me with frank welcome, and passes at once to business.

"We'll go first," he said, "into the Elizabeth Ward, as I have one or two cases there I should like you to see. This way. Isn't it a glorious building?"

"Rather expensive I have heard." This was suggested with that slight fondness for detraction common to even the most exalted human nature.

"Expensive!" replied Forcep, almost contemptuously. "Of course it was, because it is built in proper accordance with sanitary laws, and on the block system, with ample room for ventilation. But the gardens between each block, please remember, can all be used for building on, if necessary, at future times. Expensive! Why, man, it is a series of palaces," and he gave me so severe a look, that I felt I was on dangerous ground. To deprecate his hostility I praised the site of St. Thomas's, but again "put my foot in it" by inquiring if the river fog did not sometimes spread up rather cold through the hospital.

"Cold?" said Forcep, exercising me severely with his cold grey magical eye. "You should see the convalescents in summer sitting out on the terraces, enjoying the boats passing and the view of the palace."

I adroitly turned the conversation, which was becoming embarrassing, by inquiring when the doctor and students would begin their day's round.

"We shall catch them up in the next ward, where there are half a dozen new cases, which you will see. Interesting case of jaundice—rheumatic fever in several stages. Oh, you'll see, you'll see," and Forcep smiled in benign condescension on my ignorance. "This is the Elizabeth Ward we are entering now. All children—very young children. This is my favourite ward."

And well it might be. It was a long wide room, fit for the corridor of a palace, with little iron bedsteads ranged along each side, twenty-eight in all. There was a pleasant chirping murmur in it, like the sound of birds in an aviary, or in a breezy wood in spring. Pretty little faces peered over the bed-clothes, pretty little heads lay on the pillows, and here and there a curly-haired little darling lay asleep, with a scarlet-jacketed doll clutched firm in his right hand. Here and there, too—and this was the dark side of the picture—you saw a pale, pinched face and sunken eyes, watching with languid anxiety Forcep, who might perhaps be the gentleman who used that dreadful probe yesterday. But I will say this for Forcep, that for the most part, the children's eyes brightened into smiles as he passed, patting here a pale cheek, or shaking there a little dimply hand.

Here, too, at last, I may as well mention that I came upon the angels I had missed at the gate; they had divested themselves, however, of wings, no halo was around their

brows but the halo of love and kindness, but there they were, visible to mortal eyes—Faith, Hope, and Charity, three sisters, dressed in plain black, and unostentatiously intent on their good and blessed work. Faith was writing a letter home, Hope was sitting on a child's bed encouraging it to eat some jelly, and Charity was binding up a wound in accordance with the directions of one of the head nurses of the ward.

We passed a bed where a little child in a red frock lay asleep with all the birds and beasts of a small Noah's ark poured out upon the bed-clothes, and came to a dark-eyed little girl, who gave a piteous cry when Forcep tenderly put back the clothes from her chest to examine an abscess in her arm. Tenderly as a mother Forcep reassured the poor child, and refitted the dressings.

"I shan't give you any pain to-day, dear. Poor little thing," he said, as we passed on, "only eight, and she has been here three times. Her father is in prison, and her mother has run away. There is a beginning of life! She little thinks how much happier this is than home. Poor thing! perhaps she may never return there. I hardly know!"

"It has sometimes struck me," I said, "when I see all this comfort, and almost luxury at hospitals, whether an equally kind but somewhat rougher system might not be better for the poor patients. The change for those not finally healed must be great, and in some cases injurious. Excellent food, wine, wholesome lodging, pure air—all these things to go in a moment, and the bitter old life to come back."

Forcep, who was rubbing a strange-shaped, wicked-looking knife with a piece of wash-leather, here turned on me so abruptly and viciously, that I felt relieved when he returned the weapon to his Housewife's Companion.

"Bah!" he said; "so perhaps you'd keep an Irishman's skull fractured because the day he goes out he may get it cracked again? It is these lifts of food and comfort, I tell you, that pull many a child through. We tide them over; that is our object here—to tide them over."

I replied mechanically, "Oh, tide them over!" And Forcep considered me logically hors de combat.

"And how are you, you young rascal?" This was addressed to a sturdy urchin, who, having laid down his crutch, was scrambling over the polished wooden floor after a red and blue woollen ball, and who looked up with roguish eyes, that spoke for them-

selves, at the kind questioner. Other children we saw talking from bed to bed with all the gravity and savoir faire of little fairy people, exchanging, no doubt, inquiries about dolls and Noah's arks, and picture-books, and what they should have for dinner. It is suffering, I fear, that has given some of them that weird gravity which is so touching to observe, for suffering brings a wisdom of its own, and sorrow ages fast.

"You observe," cried Forcep, with a look as much as to say I don't believe you will unless I show you, for he had not quite got over my last cruel proposition, "you observe that we put pictures everywhere on the wall; and where a child's bed is for any reason shut in, we cover the screen with pictures to employ his attention, and amuse him. We try and forget nothing."

And from all this the poor child has to go back, perhaps, I thought, to a room with seven persons in it; with a family taking their meals on a coffin; the father drunk in the corner, and a step-mother beating the children. Again a warning against luxury rose in my mind, but I looked at Forcep and suppressed it.

We were just entering another ward when Forcep, in his quick, decisive, surgical way, turned on me sharp, and said, abruptly:

"Would you like to see Jones's nose. It is worth seeing. Jones is famous at this sort of thing."

Famous at noses? How famous at noses? Who is Jones? But I did not dare ask, having already lowered myself considerably in Forcep's eyes by frank confessions of ignorance, and contradictory ignorance too. Moreover, I had often observed that men dreadfully in earnest do not like joking. So I meekly said that I would like to see Jones's nose very much indeed. Forcep, however, had not waited for my surrender, for, stepping back into the child's ward, he had already asked a student to send a nurse round for Mr. Jones's nose. Would it come in a box, I reflected, or would Mr. Jones himself bring it?

The solution soon arrived, for presently we stepped into a small room, where we found an ugly stunted girl of about thirteen, standing by the fire busy at work sewing a check apron.

"Here is Jones's nose, and isn't it splendid?" said Forcep, with professional triumph smiling all over his face.

The girl's nose and Jones's nose were

identical, I presently found. It had been skilfully manufactured from a flap of skin brought down from the patient's forehead, and thrown over a light gutta-percha frame. It was of the Roman type, slightly wanting in symmetry, somewhat pasty and bloodless-looking, and not quite finished, but still, as noses go, not by any means to be despised. The grafted flesh was growing, the result was a success.

"I will prove to you that sensation is established, and that Jones has made a hit. Shut your eyes." (This to the patient.) "Now where do I touch your nose?"

Jones had evidently made a hit of the nose, for where Forcep touched a place, the girl instantly marked it with her finger.

"She's as proud as a peacock of that nose," said Forcep, "and the first day she came to chapel with it you should just have seen her."

"The only fault I find with the nose," said I, "is that there is a certain fixity and incongruity about it, as of a shy person among strangers."

"Just you have your nose blown off by accident," replied Forcep, scathingly, "and you'll be less critical. Fixity, indeed; it's no joke getting a nose fitted on at all. We go in for use, not beauty; and it will not be half a bad nose either by the time Jones has put the finishing touch. Taliacotius himself would be astonished to see what Jones does with noses."

"But suppose," I timidly suggested, "the nose doesn't grow while the rest of the body does; there will be a *reductio ad absurdum*. How about that?"

"Grow?" thundered Forcep, searching both his waistcoat pockets as if for lethal weapons; "don't tell me; Jones's noses are bound to grow. I should like to see Jones's noses not growing. Why, I believe that fellow could make two legs for a man quite as good as yours."

I eyed both my legs, and felt hurt at the observation, but, like the young Spartan, I concealed my feelings.

We now entered a ward where an intelligent, amiable doctor, followed by a train of pupils, was examining newly-arrived patients. As the doctor, sitting on the bed, or standing over the patient, questioned him closely as to his complaint, the patient's answers were taken down by one of the students deputed for the purpose, the rest of the young men grouping round, or sitting on the adjoining beds, some anxious, some careless, others with a martyred air, going through their inevit-

able routine as if they had already digested all known knowledge, and had made up their minds not to swallow a spoonful more.

Our first patient was a feeble old man, whose face and hands were a rich Indian yellow. He sat up in bed, and with a feeble voice related his symptoms. He had turned yellow in a single night, he said. The doctor was most patient and kind in his examination. The student taking notes, had written down about a page, when the old man going back a week or two earlier, the doctor, with a half-droll look of impatience, said to his note-taker:

"Now he talks of six weeks ago. Begin it all again. Write six weeks ago he felt pains."

Accustomed to hear of the rapidity of hospital practice, and the hurry to push out one batch, and to receive another, I was astonished to see how carefully the doctor performed his examinations, and how anxiously he listened and questioned till he felt sure of the exact nature of the disease. After tapping our yellow old man's back all over, he came at last to a dull patch on the right side, just over the hip, where the evil lay, and this he at once pointed out to the pupils.

Our next case was a great robust fellow, who looked like an hotel porter, and whose case seemed to baffle the medical man. There was no injury, no visible injury, yet the man seemed nervous and apprehensive.

"Why did you give that peculiar look when I approached?" said the doctor.

"Something wrong here," whispered Forcep, touching his forehead.

Again the doctor tapped and listened, with slow and patient care, but with no result. The man said he felt strangely giddy; seemed to fear his heart or his head. The doctor then touched the soles of his feet for some occult reason connected with the spinal chord.

It posed him.

"I should try shower-baths," whispered Forcep, as the student taking notes looked up, wondering when the questions and answers would come to an end.

The next patient was a young fellow of, say, eighteen, who looked like a costermonger, and who lay pale and almost lifeless in the state of collapse following great bodily agony. A great rough tuft of black hair spread over his bloodless forehead. His eyes were sunken and without light.

"Rheumatic fever—second attack," said Forcep, answering my look. "Very bad—near done if he don't rally soon—very near."

Poor fellow. Number Twenty-four, as the number over his bed named him, was too feeble to make any audible answer, though his gestures implied yes or no. This time the doctor was even more careful than before, listening with painful attention to his heart, and timing the pulse.

"Always danger of the heart in bad rheumatic fever," said Forcep; "leaves valves of the heart weakened. Confounded ticklish job."

Over every bed the relentless Forcep, who took care that my attention never wavered, bade me remark there was a ticket with the number and name of the patient, and a note of the medicine and diet which had been prescribed for him. Leaving the clinical lecturer and his little retinue of disciples, I now visited another ward with Forcep, who wanted me to help him as dresser. Just as we got to the table in the centre of the room, and had arranged the oiled silk, tow, and other requisites, Forcep turned upon me sharp as a terrier on a rat, and said:

"You would like to see some operations on the eyes? They are just beginning now in the eye ward."

I turned rather pale at this suggestion, and replied that I was much obliged, but did not think, that however eager I was for knowledge, that just then I could stand it.

Forcep gave a half-grunt and half-groan, and turned to his work with grim and quiet earnestness.

"You can come round with me then here," he said, "and make yourself useful, my boy, with the bandages and dressings."

And so I did. On what I saw I will not dilate. Sufficient to say that I did not gain much by avoiding the eye ward. Still it was very touching to see how gratefully the languid eyes turned towards Forcep, as, with touch of velvet, he did his work of mercy, stern and steely only when he was compelled to be so, and cheering many a worn heart by assurances of speedy convalescence.

"This is the time," said he, looking fiercely at his watch, "for seeing the outpatients. Come along. Nurse, mind Number Eighteen has her medicine regularly every three hours, and I shall look in again to-wards evening."

I was looking, as he said this, at a terrible aspect of death. Between the curtains of a closed bed opposite the stove where we were standing, I caught a glimpse of a dying man in the agonies of dissolution. A nurse was fanning him, another was

moistening his poor fevered hands. A few minutes more, the curtains would be closed, and all that terror would be over.

"Cancer," whispered Forcep; "very near his end, poor fellow. Come, we must hurry, or we shall miss the out-patients."

In a room on the ground floor we came upon crowds of out-patients passing by threes and fours into an inner room where a student sat at a desk by the door, taking down the names and addresses of the new applicants. A doctor sat on one side of the room with a crowd of pupils round him, and the usual note-taker by his side. He was examining the injured knee of a young workman. The knee was puffy and swollen.

"You observe," said the doctor, "when I touch on the right side of the kneecap, there is an increase of pain. What is the patient suffering from?"

"Synovitis," said the note-taker, timidly.

"Exactly," said the doctor with a smile of approval, "not a doubt of it. The locality of the injury is indisputable. We shall therefore——"

After seeing several other patients examined, Forcep now proposed a visit to the dispensary. On our way to the dispensary we passed through the central hall, the only defect of which is the lowness of the roof. Some excellent busts of great doctors adorn the hall, and in a side room (a board-room, if I remember right), is the portrait of Fordyce, an eminent glutton and doctor of Johnson's time. A more typical gourmand I never saw, the face all jaw and chin. I could quite understand how this man could soak himself in port and brandy, and then go straight to the lecture-room and discourse with unquenched sense on the mysteries of his art. We entered the dispensary from one of the spacious corridors looking out on the gardens. It looked like a medical tavern. There was row after row of great glass jars, each with its tap and pan below to catch the drippings. Quinine by the hogs-head, senna by the vatful, and all the fittings of the place as beautifully clean and neat as a Dutch dairy. The assistants, neat and careful, and quietly busy, were driving a lively trade in chloridide of potash, calomel, and preparations of steel. As for pills, they were rolling about by thousands, and the spatulas and pestles were triturating and pounding busily. At several windows out-patients were handing in and receiving bottles, packages, and pill-boxes, with a quiet, quick, business-like order most commendable.

"You see," said Forcep, with serene approval, "how we do the thing."

"I have heard," I remarked, in the blandest of voices, plucking up my courage, "that the French system of out-patients is considered better than ours. Poor women in London complain that they necessarily lose half a day's work coming here from distant streets, and waiting for their turn. In Paris the city is divided into districts by the charity administration, which is centralised all in one; and the out-patients are allowed to call in any one of certain local doctors appointed by the Bureau de Charité. This is quicker than the system here."

"All moonshine," said Forcep, rousing again to the attack. "People here know their time, and don't lose an hour. There are some persons who fancy everything French must be best. Don't you be humbugged, my boy. Couldn't be better than it is here. You shall come now and see our kitchens."

We went down several corridors, till we came to the kitchens. The modern kitchen is more like a manufactory or a laboratory than the kitchen of fifty years ago. Rows of stoves, and little visible fire; iron doors; small telescope lid-holes, over which pots and stew-pans simmer and bubble, and all in admirable order. By the side of the white-clad engineer (not the jolly red-faced cook of old times) stood a large black board, on which were chalked the hours for food required in the different wards. Only those who understand machinery, and know how much depends on a single wheel or handle, could believe that that placid, calm man in white was superintending the cooking for many hundreds of sick people.

And now the museum; Forcep was by no means going to let me shirk that. Useful as it is to science, the less I say about it here the better. Imagine endless jars of human pickles—such as adorned Doctor Faust's laboratory—skeletons of all normal and abnormal shapes, horrors in spirits, horrors in wax, horrors with vermilion veins, horrors dried and stuffed, and all winking at you with amiable and horrible welcome. If Adam could only have seen these evidences of what his children would have to suffer, how he would have wept over his luckless progeny!

As we left the museum and passed down a corridor, during which walk Forcep inflicted on me the telegraph system of communication through the building, by which any official connected with the hospital

could in a moment be communicated with, we suddenly came on a bell labelled "House Surgeon;" Forcep instantly rang it, and walked on. A minute afterwards a lusty voice shouted to him, and he ran back to inform the house surgeon that he had only rung to show a visitor the system. The house surgeon, who seemed to look on the matter as an excellent joke, gave a hearty laugh, and Forcep laughed, joining me with the air of a street boy who has effected a successful run-away knock.

"I will now show you the dissecting-room," said Forcep, in a manner too authoritative to be resisted; so off I went to a large room on the ground floor, where many students were calmly at work. Of what I saw there I must mention little. At one end of the place a grave, bearded man sat at a table, with a black board before him, on which he drew, surrounded by students, apparently jovially intent on an oyster lunch. Quaint, reckless fellows they were, some with Scotch caps, some bare-headed, several of them with their briar-root pipes in their mouths. The table was covered with glass bowls; in these bowls were——

"Demonstration of the brain," said Forcep; "the demonstrator is showing the origin of the optic nerve."

At the end of the room were two low folding doors. It was the entrance to the dead-house.

"We have," said Forcep, "a subterranean tram-road under the hospital to convey the bodies. And now I will introduce you to the secretary, and you will have seen everything, I think."

Away I was hurried, a patient victim, back to the entrance opposite Astley's. There, in a snug little room, surrounded by papers, sat the secretary, like a spider in the centre of a web, eyeing a dead leopard just sent him to stuff. There were drawings of the old Edward the Sixth hospital in the Borough on the walls, and here and there objects of vertu. The secretary, a brusque, shrewd, kindly, elderly man, was ready to answer any questions connected with the hospital to which he had devoted his life.

In 1862, he said, the old hospital was sold to the Charing Cross Company for two hundred and ninety-six thousand pounds—the hospital asked four hundred and seventy-eight thousand pounds. They purchased of the Board of Works eight acres and a half of river-side land (half reclaimed land) for ninety thousand pounds. After careful

inspection of the continental hospitals, the new building had been planned on the detached pavilion system, ranged along the Thames in one continuous corridor nine hundred feet long. This design increases the length of communication between the blocks, but renders the ventilation more free. The blocks are placed a distance of one hundred and twenty-five feet apart, the central court being two hundred feet wide, so as to allow free air and sunlight. The total amount of accommodation provided is about six hundred beds.

Here, with a dangerous frankness (Forcep frowning horribly), I remarked that adverse report had described the new building as enormously expensive—I dared not say how many hundred pounds a bed—and that the increased accommodation above the old Southwark building was very trifling.

"Not very many beds more," said the secretary, calmly, "but we have power, by building over the gardens, at any time to almost double them; but perhaps you would like to hear the rest of my statement. Our wards are all one hundred and twenty-eight feet long, twenty-eight feet wide, and fifteen feet high, and have all lifts for patients and ventilating shafts. The wards have external balconies towards the river for convalescent patients in fine weather. Each patient is provided with eighteen hundred cubic feet of air. Any of the blocks can be at any time isolated by screens across the corridors, and stopping the adjacent windows. Each ward has a small separate ward with two beds for special cases, and in each passage is a sister's room, a ward kitchen, and a room for the medical officers' consultations."

I thanked the secretary from whose lips this information had blandly flowed, and asked if the percentage of cures was greater than in the old hospital. He did not exactly wince at this, but remarked that new hospitals were seldom so healthy as old ones. It was supposed that the decomposition of the hair used in the mortar was injurious, and the evil in time disappeared.

As I was standing at the Palace-road entrance, thanking Forcep for his kindness and attention, a fat man passed out.

"Friend of Brown's," said Forcep; "give him to seventy-six. Won't run beyond that. Too fat."

With this comfortable prediction I shook hands with Forcep, and parted. The sun was high when I entered St. Thomas's; it was low when I left.

Surely, thought I, as I walked thoughtfully home, if Heaven's vengeance can be averted from cities teeming with wickedness, it must be by such blessed works as are wrought hourly in that building I have just left, and by the ceaseless fountain of grateful prayers that must go up ceaselessly from its chambers; and I walked home thinking of hospital Sunday, and all the good that might thence ensue.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE INNOCENTS.

TAKE them away! Take them away!

Out of the gutter, the ooze and slime,
Where the little vermin paddle and crawl
Till they grow and ripen into crime.

Take them away from the jaws of Death,
And the coils of evil that swaddle them round,
And stifle their souls in every breath
They draw on the foul and fetid ground.

Take them away! away! away!
The bountiful Earth is wide and free,
The New shall repair the wrongs of the Old—
Take them away o'er the rolling sea!

Take them away! Take them away!

The boys from the gallows, the girls from worse;
They'll prove a blessing to other lands,
Here, if they linger they'll prove a curse;

The Law's despair—the State's reproach
From the mother's breast to the sheltering grave;
One in a thousand too many to hang,
Ten in a dozen too few to save!

Take them away! away! away!
Plant them anew upon wholesome soil,
Till their hearts grow fresh in the purer air,
And their hands grow hard with honest toil.

Take them away! Take them away!

To con the lesson they never knew,
And can never learn mid the reek and rot
Of the sweltering garbage where they grew;
The lesson that Work is the gift of Heaven—

A blessing to lighten all human ill,
And that the generous Earth affords
Work and Reward to all who will.

Take them away! away! away!
Out of the misery and the scorn,
Out of the guilt and the shame that track them,
Out of the Midnight into the Morn!

Take them away! Take them away!

The seeds are good while they are new,
And will grow in time into lordly trees
On the favouring soil, in the fattening dew.

Why should they perish beneath our feet,
Trodden to death by the hurrying crowd,
Or cast aside, as of no account,
By the rich, the careless, and the proud?

Take them away! away! away!
The bountiful Earth is wide and free,
The New shall repair the wrongs of the Old—
God be with them over the sea!

MORE NORTHERN LIGHTS.

THE professors of the university have always been the centre of the intellectual society of the Scottish metropolis; but more especially was this the case early in the century than now, when general refinement, learning, and education are confined to no particular class. Thirty or forty years

ago things were different. The brilliant men of the past, the Cullens, Gregorys, Monros, Dunbars, and others, were not dead, or had departed so recently that their fame was still green, while Hamilton, Hope, Jamieson, Allison, and John Wilson, the famous "Christopher North," were in the zenith of their reputation. Naturally the old physician, whose recollections of his contemporaries we have jotted down in a former article,* had many quaint anecdotes to relate regarding the famous professors or "extra-academical" teachers of the north, whom he had known during the long years of his life. A few of these reminiscences may not be without interest.

Perhaps the most eminent teacher of anatomy in Edinburgh, or in Britain, early in this century, was Doctor Robert Knox. He was a man abounding in anything but the milk of human kindness towards his professional brethren, and if people had cared in these days to go to law about libels, it is to be feared Knox would have been rarely out of a court of law. Personality and satirical allusions were ever at his tongue's end. After attracting immense classes, his career came very suddenly to a close. I need scarcely refer to the atrocious murders which two miscreants, named Burke and Hare, carried on for some time to supply the dissecting-rooms with "subjects." They were finally discovered, and one of them executed, the other turning king's evidence. Knox's name got mixed up with the case, being supposed to be privy to these murders, though many considered him innocent. The populace, however, were of a different opinion. Knox's house was mobbed, and though he braved it out, he never afterwards succeeded in regaining popular esteem. He was a splendid lecturer, and a man who, amid all his self-conceit and malice, could occasionally say a bitingly witty thing. It is usual with lecturers at their opening lecture to recommend text-books, and accordingly Knox would commence something as follows: "Gentlemen, there are no text-books I can recommend. I wrote one myself, but it is poor stuff. I can't recommend it. The man who knows most about a subject writes worst on it. If you want a good text-book on any subject, recommend me to the man who knows nothing earthly about the subject. (That was the reason that Doctor T. was asked

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. ix., p. 389.

to write the article, Physical Geography, for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*). The result is that we have no good text-book on anatomy. We will have soon, however, Professor *Monro* is going to write one." That was the finale, and, of course, brought down the house, when, with a sinister expression on his face, partly due to long sarcasm and partly to the loss of an eye, he would bow himself out of the lecture-room.

The Professor *Monro*, so courteously referred to by *Knox*, was, I need hardly tell any one acquainted in the slightest with the history of Scottish science, the professor of anatomy in the university, and the third of that name who had filled the chair for one hundred and twenty years. They are well remembered as the *Monros*, *Primus*, *Secundus*, and *Tertius*, and bear the relationship to each other of grandfather, father, and son. The first of the name was the founder of the *Edinburgh School of Medicine*, and one of the most distinguished men of his day. The second was also an able and eminent man; while the third—the one to whom we will more particularly refer—was—well, not a very distinguished man in any way. Nevertheless, in due course, as if by right of birth, he succeeded his father in the very lucrative post of professor of anatomy in the then famous medical faculty of the *University of Edinburgh*. I say by right of birth; for if it was not by that right he had no other claim to fill the chair. He was not naturally a man deficient in ability, but was so insufferably careless that soon he really forgot the elements of the subject he had to teach. The students were not long in learning this too, and accordingly sought their anatomical instruction elsewhere. Doctor *Knox* and others were what are called extra-academical lecturers. Their lectures qualified for all examining boards except the *University of Edinburgh*, which did not recognise them, and accordingly the students were compelled to attend the university professors for their certificate, while they went to *Knox* and others to get their knowledge. Now-a-days these extra-academical lecturers are recognised by the university, are under the same laws as the university professors, and, with some restrictions, their lectures qualify for degrees in medicine. They, however, lecture at the same hour as the university professors. *Knox*, however, lectured at a different hour from *Monro*, namely, exactly five minutes after the

conclusion of the professor's lecture. Accordingly, the students trooped over from *Monro* to *Knox*, greatly to the annoyance, but in no way to the loss, of the former. It may be well supposed that during their enforced attendance on *Monro's* lectures they did not spend much time in listening to what he had to say. In fact, they used to amuse themselves during the hour of his lecture, and always used to organise some great field days during the session. So lazy was *Monro* that he was in the habit of using his grandfather's lectures, written more than one hundred years before. They were—as was the fashion then—written in Latin, but his grandson gave a free translation as he proceeded, without, however, taking the trouble to alter the dates. Accordingly, in 1820 or 1830 students used to be electrified to hear him slowly drawling out, "When I was in Padua in 1694." This was the signal for the fun to begin. On the occasion when this famous speech was known to be due the room was always full, and no sooner was it uttered than there descended showers of peas on the head of the devoted professor, who, to the end of his life, could never understand what it was all about.

Another jubilee was when he was describing the structure of the calf of the leg. Here are two muscles, called the *semimembranosus* and *semitendinosus*, lying one over the other, but which was which, the learned professor, for the life of him, could never remember. Regularly every year, as the time came, his assistant "ground him up" on the subject. Chalk marks and private notches were put upon them, but all in vain. As he came to the ticklish point all fled out of his head, and while the theatre was silent to await the coming fun, he would cast anxious glances at the demonstrator, but to no effect. Then, in desperation, he would push his porcupine quill beneath them, and blandly remark, "Gentlemen, these are the *semimembranosus* and *semitendinosus* muscles!" Then followed gallons of peas, and the lecture was at an end for that day.

In such a class all sorts of queer scenes were of frequent occurrence. An Irish student called, let us say, *O'Leary*, was the butt of the class one winter session. Independently of his nationality, never very popular in *Edinburgh*, he dressed in a most remarkable fashion, and wore pumps and white duck trousers summer and winter, with a long frock-coat buttoned up to his

throat, leaving in the minds of spectators a suspicion of there being no shirt beneath. He generally entered the class late, and his entry was the signal for applause, in no way flattering to Mr. O'Leary's pride. At last he could stand it no longer, and stood up in the theatre and appealed to the professor to put a stop to it. Monro suggested that if he came in a little earlier he might avoid much of the unwelcome plaudits with which he was greeted. This evasive answer maddened our irate Celt. "Sirr," was the reply, "I see that ye are not only tolerating, but aiding and abetting of these riots and insults to me. Now, sirr, allow me to inform ye, that if these proceedings are continued, I shall hold you responsible, and inflict upon ye the chastisement which your age and infirmities will admit of!" The idea of an undergraduate inflicting personal chastisement on a university don within the walls of his own lecture-room was so brilliant, that for a moment the listeners were stupefied. But soon the ringing cheers which greeted the bold speaker showed that the generous feelings of his fellow-students were touched. Ever after Mr. O'Leary was saved all further annoyance, and to Monro's credit, be it said, no notice was taken of the egregious breach of discipline his pupil had been guilty of.

Sometimes Monro would request a student to take notes. Next day the student would be seen sitting most gravely in the front bench, under the nose of the professor, with a ledger for his note-book, a blacking bottle for an inkstand, and seven or eight quill pens, one stuck on the end of another, until they reached to about a yard in length. No wonder that Monro Tertius's lectures are now recalled by grey-haired old physicians as the most amusing part of their whole medical studies in Edinburgh. Finally, the university induced him to resign on favourable terms (to himself), and ever since the chair has been filled by men of eminence commensurate with its importance. He is now long ago dead, but occasionally curious students of biography will disinter from the now rare "University Maga" some most amusing verses descriptive of his peculiarities, by a student who in after days became very famous, Edward Forbes, late professor of natural history in the university.

I dare say, in these latter degenerate days, we should consider the spectacle of three fashionable physicians getting very tipsy at a consultation in a judge's house, or anywhere else, a very disgraceful and lament-

able spectacle. And so it would be; but yet the old physician, whose memory supplied me with these reminiscences, could recollect such an event. Nor was it looked upon in these heavy drinking days as anything but a remarkably good joke. I think it was the famous Doctor Cullen who told the story, but I will not be certain. He and two other physicians had an appointment for a consultation about the case of Lord ——, a judge of the Court of Session in Edinburgh. On arriving at the house they were met by the judge's clerk, a venerable old fellow, whose preternaturally grave face betokened something unusual. "How is his lordship?" was the natural inquiry. To which the clerk replied, with a peculiar expression, "I hope he's weel!" The judge was dead, but the cautious Scot was not, even under the affecting circumstances, going to commit himself to a decided opinion with regard to his late master's welfare in his present unknown place of abode! The three physicians were of course exceedingly shocked at the sad event, and, after expressing some of the commonplaces suitable for the occasion, were about to take their departure. But no; the old clerk had another duty to perform. "Na, gentlemen, you must na leave without takin' a little refreshment." As the judge's cellar was as celebrated as himself, no objection was made to this hospitable invitation, and the party were ushered into the dining-room, where their host for the time being proceeded to decant one of half a dozen of port standing on the sideboard. The port was excellent, and after a couple of glasses they rose to leave. The clerk, however, put himself between them and the door, and quietly locking it and putting the key in his pocket, remarked, as he filled the decanter a second time, "Na, na, gentlemen, yer na gang awa' yet. Amang the last words his lordship said to me were, 'John, I'll have slipped awa' before the doctors come, but when they dae come, jest ye see that they no gang oot of this hoose sober. Bring up half a dozen of my Earthquake port, and see they dae their duty to't. It'll no be said that the last guests in ma hoose went hame sober.' It was his last wish, gentlemen, and maun be obeyed!"

"And to tell you the truth," was the doctor's remark to my friend, as he related him the anecdote, "his lordship's wish was strictly obeyed, for afore we left the table there was na ane o' us could bite oor thumb."

It was a hard drinking time—a time of bacchanalian toasts and loyal bumpers, when “gentlemen” sat down early to, and rose up late from, the dining-table; when at certain periods of the evening a boy was introduced under the table to unloose the neckcloths of gentlemen who fell down drunk; and when a remonstrance at some one more temperate than another passing the decanter was thought to be more stringent if it was enforced by calling attention to the fact “that the night was young yet—the callant’s no under the table!” All classes of society drank, and drank frequently to excess too. A jovial farmer would go into a tavern when the landlady was “setting” a hen, and would never come out again until the chickens were running about. His superiors might not carry things to such an excess, but a two days’ drinking-bout was thought the most common thing in the world, and the capacity for standing a certain number of bottles the test of a thorough good fellow. These were the days of five-bottle men, and in St. Andrew’s University was a student’s club called the Nine-Tumbler Club, the test of fitness for entrance into which was the ability of the candidate, after drinking nine tumblers of hot whisky toddy, to pronounce articulately the words, “Bib-li-cal cri-ticism.” A miserly old laird used to make it his boast, that so popular a man was he that he could go to market with sixpence in his pocket, and come home drunk with the sixpence still in his pocket.

Lord Nairne, after returning from his long exile in France, on account of his adherence to the House of Stuart, expressed himself, in the company of the friends who had gathered round him to welcome him back again, thoroughly disgusted with the sober habits of the Parisians. “I canna express to ye, gentlemen, the satisfaction I feel in getting men of some sense about me, after being so lang plagued wi’ a set o’ fules nae better than brute beasts, that winna drink mair than what serves them!” Another gentleman who had disinherited his son, reinstated him in his rights when he discovered, after a separation of some years, that the lad was a fair and sound drinker. Another (a baronet) observing that the family tutor—a licentiate of the church—kept his seat after all the other guests at the dinner-table had fallen beneath it, asked if he “could snuff the candle.” The tutor was successful in his efforts, and then, so pleased was the baronet, that there and then he ex-

claimed “for this I’ll present you to the West Kirk of Greenock, when it becomes vacant.” The church referred to was one of the best livings in Scotland, and the tutor, doubtless, thought that a promise made at such a time would not be very strictly respected by the patron when sober. Nevertheless, when a few years afterwards the living fell vacant, he went to the baronet’s agent, and told him of the incident. The factor considered for some time, and then asked, “Was he drunk or sober when he made the promise?”

“I fear all but quite drunk,” said the young clergyman.

“Then you are sure of the living,” was the factor’s reply, “for while Sir — sometimes is oblivious of what he says when he is sober, he is sure to remember everything he says when drunk.”

And he was right, for the reverend toper filled the pulpit, and drank at the tables of the hard-drinking gentlemen of West Greenock for many years after.

A man who did not drink, and drink hard too, was apt to be thought boorish, and had as little chance of mingling in the convivial society of the district he lived in as an Irish gentleman of the same period who didn’t “blaze.” My old friend used to tell an anecdote of a clergyman of his acquaintance who was utterly shocked when administering consolation to a dying Highland chief, to be asked if there “was any whisky in heaven?” And, half apologetically, “Ye ken, sir, it’s no that I care for it, but it looks weel on the table.”

The drinking propensity of the age was not, as the Greenock anecdote will have told the reader, limited to jovial farmers and lairds. The church was in no way back in claiming a place in that bibulous age. The late Very Reverend Doctor Baird, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, used to tell a story to the effect that in his youth he was officiating in a distant parish for the clergyman who was then absent from home. In the evening he dined with the chief proprietor, and while in the drawing-room before dinner, he got into talk with another of the guests, who soon discovered that they had a common friend in Edinburgh. This accordingly was a new bond of friendship, and it was probably owing to this that Doctor Baird’s newly acquired friend—who happened also to be a clergyman—took him by the button-hole as the butler announced dinner, and gravely whispered, “Tak’ ma advice and bend weel into the Madeira at denner, for

it's deevilish little o't ye'll get here after!" The utmost praise another clergyman of the same period would assign to the French, of whom he had a most wholesome hatred, was, "Well, well," in a forgiving tone of voice, "there's nae use denying the bodies brew gude drink," and as he sipped another glass of claret, he looked around as if he ought to have gained much credit for the extreme liberality of his sentiment. Another Highland minister is reported to have preached a sermon against evil drinking something after the following strain, only I have toned down his Gaelic accent somewhat. "Ma freends," he remarked, "dinna* aye be dram, dram, drammin'. Of coorse ye may tak' a dram for your mornin': everybody does that when he gets up: and maybe another as he looks up the sheep, and ane to refresh ye when ye come in. Maist folk tak' ane at breakfast (I myself indeed tak' twa for my stomach), and ye canna well get through to twelve o'clock without meeting a friend, and then maist folk have ane, unless indeed in extraordinary circumstances. Of course ye'll hev ane at dinner, and maybe a settler up in the shape o' a snifter in the afternoon. At supper everybody tak's a tumbler o' toddy, or may be twa, unless y've been eatin' haggis, when it's necessary to tak' a thimblefu' of gude Glenleeve, and afore a body gangs to bed they tak' ane, or twa tumblers (I myself dena sleep without it). That's a' richt,† friends, but for ony sake dinna be aye dram, dram, drammin'!" The same worthy used to remark that "whisky's a bad thing," and then, as if to qualify such a dangerous sentiment, "especially bad whisky."

This was in the early years of the century, but not over thirty years ago—the writer did not require the aid of the old physician's memory to recal this anecdote): A certain judge of the Court of Session, whose name is famous far beyond Edinburgh, was returning late one night, or early one morning, from a jovial party, so intoxicated that he could not find his own house. Lord R. was, however, not a man to be put out, so he quietly stepped up to a watchman, and in a careless tone of voice inquired:

"Honest man, could ye tell me where Lord R. (mentioning his own name) lives?"

The watchman raised his lantern to the face of the inquirer. "Why, you're him!"

"Ah! honest man, well I ken that,"

was the careless reply; "but where do I live?"

Happily for Scotland these drunken days are over, and though she still bears the reputation of being by no means the soberest of the three kingdoms, yet her drunken fashions have descended from the educated and great of the land to another stratum of society, where the vice, if as deplorable, is more to be excused. Were I to tell all the quaint tales of old Edinburgh that occur to me, I fear that even a sederunt of the St. Andrew's Nine-Tumbler Club would be insufficient. One more and I have done. At the beginning of this century, and for years far into it, there was no more popular man in Edinburgh society than Doctor Hope—professor of chemistry in the university. A bachelor, most punctilious in his dress, and abounding in very nicely turned periods of small talk, there was no man more in favour with the ladies than the courtly professor. Accordingly, when he would enter the "assembly" some evening, bowing on every side, the band would strike up (in neat allusion to his blarney) Hope told a Flattering Tale, and then he would again bow in profusion on every side, quite understanding the allusion and the compliment. Just about that period there was a furore among the ladies of the modern Athens for "higher female education"—a furore which has in these latter days revived. Accordingly, Doctor Hope was importuned by his female friends to give them some lectures in chemistry. He agreed, but the university authorities ruled that it was against law for ladies to pass to Doctor Hope's laboratory through the university gates. The professor was not long in overcoming this difficulty, for he had a window which opened to the street (South College-street), and accordingly through it the ladies entered his lecture room for a whole winter. So successful were these and subsequent courses that the professor accumulated from them more than a thousand pounds, which, quite forgiving the university senate the ungenerous trick they had played on him in trying to stop the course of lectures from which the money was derived, he devoted the sum to founding certain Hope scholarships in chemistry in the university. Curiously enough, three years ago one of these was won by a young lady: but the senate, who had permitted her to attend the lectures, ruled against her holding the emolument, on the ground that no provision was made for a woman holding it!

* Do not.

† Right.

Jovial parties in taverns were long the rule in old Edinburgh, and are, though to a smaller extent, still in vogue. In those days they were, however, quite in fashion. The *Noctes Ambrosianæ* will have familiarised most of the readers of this article with the intellectual products of some of them. At one of them Doctor Black—the most eminent chemist of that age—and Doctor Hutton, the founder of the Huttonian School of Geological Philosophy (which still holds sway), were once dining together, and got into a most philosophical discussion regarding snails as an article of food. No doubt the hated French ate them, but still why should they be worse food than oysters—were not they both molluscs? Finally they concluded to try them, and in due course a dish of snails was set before each. But they were one thing and philosophy another, and for some time both savans pecked about the dish, not making much way, but neither liking to be the first to give it up. Doctor Black, who was a most polite man, at last began to remark, “Doctor Hutton, don’t you think these molluscs are just a little, a very little peculiar?”

This was enough for the now thoroughly disgusted Hutton, who instantly flung them from him with the exclamation: “Peculiar! d——d peculiar, d——d peculiar!”

It was not a polished expression, but it was characteristic of the age and the man. With it we will close these reminiscences of the old doctors of Edinburgh as they lived and moved across the old physician’s memory.

W I G S.

WE might fain suppose that men first wore wigs because, in the estimation of the humble-minded and innocent, the wisdom’s in the wig; as well as the stern impartiality of the judge, the patriarchal goodness of the bishop, the matured experience of the elder. But this obviously will not do as an explanation, seeing that wig-wearers have been, as a class, not specially distinguished for any of these attributes: nay, they seem much more frequently to have been the leaders or followers of fashion. There is nothing in the name that helps us; for the word wig comes nobody seems to know whence. There has, it is true, been a vast array of learning about peruke or periwig, and its

connexion with the French peruke or perruque, the Italian perucca, the Spanish peluca, the Latin pilus, the Gothic-Latin pellucus, the Greek *ανίχη*, the Hebrew perah, and the Chaldee pervah. Possibly the parentage or genealogy may be somewhat in this form—pilus (hair), peluca, pellucus, perucca, perruque, peruke, periwig, wig. Or is it, after all, to some personal peculiarity, temporary or permanent, that we must look for the origin of wig-wearing.

Hannibal, some of the old historians say, had a variety of wigs in wear, when he wished to go about incognito; and a similar manoeuvre has frequently been adopted in later times; but throughout the classical and mediæval ages the natural hair seems to have been pretty generally shown, although trimmed and decked out in a variety of odd ways. Stow says that periwigs first saw the light in England in the time of Queen Elizabeth: but he gives no clear proof of the source whence they came. Shortly before the close of her reign these wigs of moderate size were so much in fashion, and the periwig-makers became so busy, that it was dangerous to let children wander about the streets alone, lest some dexterous knave should waylay them for a few minutes, and clip off their flowing locks to supply the demand. There must, however, be some sort of mistake here; for mention may be found of perukes a century before Elizabeth’s time, in connexion with one of those miracle-plays which were then in vogue. William Canynges, or Cannings, the famous Bristol merchant, gave to the parochial authorities of St. Mary Redcliff the dresses and stage machinery for a miracle-play, which comprised, among other items: “Heaven, made of timber and stained cloths; Hell, made of timber and iron work thereto, with Devils the number of thirteen; four Angels made of timber, and well painted; four perukes longeth to the four Angels!” An angel’s peruke must have been something to see!

The seventeenth century was the great era of wigs. Louis the Thirteenth lost his hair, and put on a wig; whereupon it became the fashion so to do. Thus goes the story, which may or may not be true. Louis the Fourteenth increased the size of his wigs to a degree never before attained; he was so sensitive about the matter (having become somewhat bald), that he was never seen with his bare head except by his chosen barber. At night, when tucked up in bed,

and the curtains drawn, he exchanged his wig for a nightcap, and handed the former out between the curtains to his valet, who handed the wig back to him the same way in the morning, when the Grand Monarque was about to rise. The courtiers followed the fashion, and so did divines, physicians, and advocates; and the changes were rung upon perruques rondes, carrées, and pointues, perruques à boudins and perruques à papillons, perruques à deux marteaux and perruques à trois marteaux, and every other kind of wig conceivable by human ingenuity.

Nor did England fall below or behind France in this matter. Charles the First, when prince, spent a short time at Paris, on his way to Spain, and "shadow'd himself the most he could under a burly peruke, which none in former days but bald-headed people used, but now generally intended into a fashion; and the prince's was so big that it was hair enough for his whole face." These were the words of Arthur Wilson, writing in 1653. Wigs flourished in all their glory during the time of Charles the Second. Pepys had much to say on this topic, sometimes applicable to himself. In one of the entries in his Diary for 1663, he said: "Home; and by-and-bye came Chapman, the perriwigg maker, and upon my liking it without more ado I must up, and then he cut off my haire, which went a little to my heart at present to part with it; but it being over, and my perriwigg on, I paid him three pounds, and away went he with my own hair to make up another of; and by-and-bye went abroad, after I had caused all my maids to look upon it, and they concluded it do become me, though Jane was mightily troubled for my parting with my own hair, and so was Bessie." Again: "Lord's Day. To church, which I found that my coming in a perriwigg did not prove so strange as I was afraid it would, for I thought that all the church would presently have cast their eyes upon me, but I find no such thing." It is evident that Pepys was thinking more about his wig than about serious subjects. Again, under date 1667: "To a perriwigg maker, and there bought two perriwiggs, mighty fine indeed, too fine I thought for me, but he persuaded me, and I did buy them for four pounds ten shillings the two;" and a day or two afterwards: "To church, and with my mourning, very handsome, and new perriwigg, made a great show." A gentleman in that reign had such a passion for wigs that he employed an

artist to give wigs to all the Vandyck portraits he possessed. Holme, in his *Heraldry*, written in 1680, says:—"The perawicke (one more mode of spelling this word!) is a short bob, or head of hair, that hath short locks and a hairy crown. This is a counterfeit hair which men wear instead of their own, a thing much used in our days by the generality of men; contrary to our forefathers who got estates, loved their wives, and wore their own hair; but in these days there is no such things."

Besides the full-bottomed wig, covering back, chest, and shoulders alike, there was the short peruke, with short locks; the long peruke, with a poll lock, or sort of twisted tail; the travelling wig, with the side locks turned up into bobs or knots, which were tied with ribbons; and the grafted wig, with the top so haired as to imitate the crown of the head. On the Lord Mayor's Day of 1680, the show or pageant was much more grand and imposing than in these degenerate days of ours. Sir Patience Ward's pageant in that year comprised, among other features in the procession, a figure representing "Harmonia, a lady of great gravity, with masculine aspect, wearing a lovely dark brown peruke, curiously curled, on which is planted a crown imperial." Possibly this lovely dark brown peruke had a golden tinge, such as is in favour with some ladies at the present time.

The Puritans, when they emigrated to America, took with them a dislike to Cavalier wigs, as to most other things that pertained to the fashion of the day; and this aversion long remained among them. In the Diary of Judge Sewell of Massachusetts, 1696, we find this entry: "Mr. Sims told me of the assaults he had made on perriwigs; seemed to be in good sober sadness." In 1708, "Mr. Cheever died; the welfare of the province was much upon his heart; he abominated perriwigs." And in 1721, the Society of Friends at Hampton, Massachusetts, voted that "the wearing of extravagant wiggles is altogether antagonistic to truth."

Who does not know the Ramilies wig of Queen Anne's reign? Our National Portrait Gallery presents it to us in abundance. Sir David Dalrymple, writing in 1760, said: "Queen Anne was the patroness of full-bottomed wigs. Some of her officers who had served in Flanders imported an alteration in her favourite dress; it consisted in collecting the monstrous tail or

fleece, and tying it up with ribbons." This change was evidently viewed with some dislike, at least at first. "Either General Gower, or General Green, I forget which, both tall handsome men, and officers of cavalry, appeared at court with this modification of the full locks. The queen, turning to the lady of the bedchamber in waiting, said, 'I suppose that presently gentlemen will come to court in their jack-boots!'" In 1714 (the last year of Anne's reign) the fashion arose of having the hair bleached; but as this artificial white soon turned to an ashey grey, it suggested the use of hair-powder, which thereupon commenced a career destined to last more than a century. A wig-maker's advertisement, which appeared in 1724, gives us the names of many kinds of head-covering in vogue at that time. "Joseph Pickeaver, peruke maker, who formerly lived at the Black Lyon in Copper-alley, is now remov'd under Tom's Coffee House, where all gentlemen may be furnished with all sorts of perukes, as full bottom tyes, full bobs, ministers' bobs, naturalls, half naturalls, Grecian flyes, curley roys, airy levants, qu perukes, and bagg wiggs." Curley roys, airy levants, and qu perukes are evidently lame attempts to imitate French spelling. The *troupée* or *toupie* was an enormous raising up of the top of the wig, almost to the height of a grenadier's bearskin. This fashion was alluded to in 1771 in the *Modern Husband*, where one of the characters says: "I meet with nothing but a parcel of toupet coxcombs, who plaster up their brains upon their perriwigs;" or rather, we suppose, plaster their periwigs over their brains.

Quite early in the reign of George the Third, we find curious trade evidence that a change of fashion had taken place, and also that competition interfered with the cherished privileges of protection. The master peruke-makers presented a petition to the king in 1765, complaining that gentlemen had begun to wear their own hair, instead of buying wigs, and that French perruquiers were taking away English customers; they also brought the Sunday observance question forward, saying: "They at the same time lament the fatal necessity they are under of misemploying the Lord's Day in worldly pursuits, which day of all others they are most hurried and confused; by which they and their families become as those who know not God; while their fellow-subjects are happy in the inestimable privileges of

attending and discharging their religious duties, and imbibing continually those precepts that teach to bear a conscience void of offence, to fear God and honour the king." They asked his majesty to help them, probably by reintroducing the fashion of wig-wearing; but Good King George never wore other than a very small wig at any period of his life. Poor wigsters: they were much laughed at; for a satirical petition was got up, purporting to come from the wooden-leg makers, praying that his majesty, for the encouragement of trade, would graciously deign to wear a wooden leg!

A peruke-maker, about the same period, issued an advertisement, informing his patrons and the public that "He has a copper-plate engraved, which enables any lady or gentleman to take an accurate measure of their own head." This was not a matter of so much importance when the wigs in fashion were so monstrous as to contain something like a peck of hair; but the natty perukes which marked the greater part of the reign of George the Third must certainly have required some attention to insure the right shape and size. Later in the century, as an engraving of the time tells us, a wig-seller of Middle-row, Holborn, was wont to stand at the door of his shop wearing and combing one of his wigs, and calling the attention of a customer to its merits. The price of a common wig was one guinea; a journeyman usually treated himself to a new one once a year; and it was a frequent clause in an apprentice's indentures that his master should provide him with "one good and sufficient wig yearly during the term of his apprenticeship." If ladies' head-dresses, rather than real wigs and perukes, were the subject of the present paper, we should have to notice the monstrous height (literally, not merely figuratively) which such head-gear attained in the latter quarter of the century. Queen Marie Antoinette is said to have invented a coiffure which represented all the refinements of landscape gardening—hills and valleys of hair, dewy prairies, silver streamlets, foaming torrents, symmetrical gardens, and so forth. It took such a long time to dress a court lady's hair for a court day that it had to be done overnight, and the poor victim slept as well as she could in an arm-chair, to keep her elaborate coiffure safe from derangement. A great change took place at one period of King George's reign, owing to

Queen Charlotte's loss of hair during an illness; she adopted a new and simpler head-dress; and the fashionable ladies were not sorry to follow a reform so conveniently established.

The army had its fashions, like the court, in regard to the wearing of wigs. During the eighteenth century the military wigs kept about equal pace with the civil, and, like them, gradually died out altogether. Just about the beginning of the present century wigs began to be discarded altogether; the natural hair was worn, powdered and plaited into a queue, long or short according to taste, and twisted with ribbons. There can be no question that the wig-makers really suffered by this change of fashion, as the buckle-makers did in the same reign, and as the straw-bonnet makers have often done since. But even the abandonment of wigs and perukes did not lessen the amount of attention necessary to the hair; nay, it increased that necessity, for a man could have his wig dressed before it was put on his head—an achievement somewhat difficult with one's own hair. It is reported that, on one occasion, when a field-day was ordered in one of our garrisons, there not being sufficient barbers in the garrison to attend all the officers in the morning, the juniors had their heads dressed overnight; and to prevent damage to the artistic arrangement thus produced, the pomatumed, powdered, and curled officers were forced to sleep as well as they could on their faces. In the adjutant's office for each regiment was kept a pattern of the correct or regulation curls to which the barbers were to conform. Pigtails were worn very long until about the year 1807, when they were reduced by official orders to a length of seven inches; in 1808 they were abolished altogether, to the great relief both of officers and men.

The ecclesiastical wig underwent no fewer changes than the military. Its adoption was a grave matter, and its subsequent abandonment was the subject of still more discussion. Archbishop Tillotson is said to have been the first spiritual peer who wore a wig; this, however, is not quite certain; but there can be no doubt that the spiritual bench gradually followed the usage of laymen. Not only so; the high clergy, early in the century, continued to wear powdered wigs after most other persons had agreed to dispense with them. Who was the first modern bishop who ventured to appear in public without a wig,

seems to be a matter of dispute. One account tells that, in 1799, "All Oxford was thrown into a ferment by the refusal of their newly-appointed bishop (Doctor Randolph) to abandon a comfortable head of hair for an episcopal wig; but usage was too strong for him to resist; he yielded after a time." What he felt, however, many other bishops felt, that a wig is not really a comfort except to a bald-headed man. Doctor Barrington, Bishop of Durham, left off his wig in hot weather during the days of the Regency. Doctor Legge, Bishop of Oxford, is said to have asked George the Third's permission to dispense with his wig. What the monarch replied, we do not know; but he was not prone to changes in such matters. The first bishops who really appeared in the House of Peers without their wigs were the Irish bishops soon after the Union; and much attention was attracted to Archbishop Beresford's fine bald patriarchal head among his bewigged English brethren. It is said that, when one of the bishops asked the king's opinion on the subject, pointing out that bishops always wore their own hair down to the seventeenth century, the monarch replied, "Yes, my lord, but they also wore beards and moustaches; I suppose you would hardly like to carry out the precedent. I think a distinction of some sort necessary, and I am satisfied with that which I find established." The Prince Regent once told Doctor Bagot, who was a remarkably handsome man, that it would be a pity to cover such a head, and jokingly promised not to insist on the episcopal wig if the doctor ever became a bishop. This contingency happened in the course of time, and George the Fourth, though rather reluctantly, fulfilled his promise, when the matter was recalled to his attention by Bishop Bagot. The example was soon followed by Doctor Blomfield, Bishop of London. A conversation has appeared in print, in which the Duke of Wellington took part in 1834. The guests at a dinner were commenting on the fact that Bishop Blomfield had appeared in the House of Lords; whereupon the Duke said: "Louis the Fourteenth had a hump, and no man, not even his valet, ever saw him without his wig; it hung down his back, like the judges' wigs, to hide the hump. But the Dauphin, who had not a hump, couldn't bear the heat; so he cut the wig round close to the poll; and the episcopal wig that you are all making such a fuss about, is the wig of the most profligate days of the

French court." William the Fourth did not care about the matter, so the bishops wore wigs or not as they pleased after 1830. Since that year it has simply been a matter of speculative gossip whether this or that bishop or archbishop wore a wig in a particular year. Speaking generally, the episcopal wig may be regarded as a thing of the past, although it still sometimes makes its appearance on ceremonial occasions. John Wesley's wig was shown at the Leeds Exhibition, by Mr. Hale, to whose father Wesley had bequeathed it.

Not so the judge's wig; that still lives in all its glory. Sometimes the judges wore two kinds of wig—a short brown one in the morning, a flowing white one in the evening. Lawyers themselves have discussed the question why judges may wear full-bottomed wigs; why queen's counsel and serjeants-at-law may also do so; why barristers who have not risen to a silk gown must confine themselves to small wigs; and whether recorders ought to rank with the higher or the humbler class in this particular. One thing is certain, that wigs in hot weather are quite as much a torment as an honour. The Times contained the following sketch during the sultry summer of 1868:

"During the last two days the learned judge and the bar have been sitting without their wigs, and in opening a case (in the Probate and Divorce Court),

"Sir R. Collier called attention to the innovation, and apologised for not appearing in full forensic costume.

"His lordship said he had set the example of leaving off the wig in consequence of the unprecedented heat of the weather, as he thought there were limits to human endurance.

"Sir R. Collier expressed a wish that this precedent may be generally followed: and hoped that the obsolete institution of the wig was coming to an end—a hope in which many members of the bar heartily concur."

Perhaps our boys may, before they become men, witness the death and burial of even that tremendous instrument of punishment, the judge's wig.

According to a report from Paris (which, with other French news, may be a little incorrect), a committee of ladies has decided to introduce a fashion of wigs instead of chignons. The latter are pronounced to be troublesome to keep in good array; whereas the former are always ready. It is further proposed that each lady (pe-

cuniary means permitting), shall keep many wigs of different colours, harmonising with different styles and tints of dress. We can imagine the perruquiers invoking blessings on this ladies' committee.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXIV. ALLIANCE.

THAT very morning Mr. Nagle was, what he called, "junketing down" to the sick man's house, when he saw Lady Duke go in. He smiled, half in contempt, half in enjoyment. "Some people," he thought, "are strangely pachydermatous. Here is a woman that has been snubbed and re-snubbed. There is a positive indecency in such persistence." He was devising a sarcastic speech to this effect, when he was admitted.

No Lady Duke was in the drawing-room, nor in the parlour. What did this mean? The doctor came in. Mr. Nagle, fiery with excitement and suspicion, began to bluster:

"What is this, and the meaning of this, Spooner—this holing and cornering, and finessing—smuggling in some, and excluding others?"

"You have strange phrases, Mr. Nagle," said the other, "which, I am sure, go beyond your meaning. Mr. Doughty asked to see Lady Duke."

"Asked! I don't believe it. Let me see him. If the man's capable enough to see her he can see me. I tell you what, sir, I know there's a game going on here. Let me pass."

"Pardon me," said the other, standing in the doorway; "I cannot permit it—at least now. I have no doubt he will see you later, and if he express the least desire you shall be admitted."

"I shall be admitted! Well, who gave you the right to set yourself up as captain and commander-in-chief here. I see your game, sir; you want to kick down the ladder on which you scrambled up, and——"

"I think you must see, Mr. Nagle, that any more of this language will bring about unpleasantness, and prejudice your interests. I can make allowance for your excitement up to this point, but I am sure you will be wise, and see on reflection that you are pursuing an imprudent course."

This did strike our professor, and he moderated his tone.

"But when I see one woman let in and another excluded—my Corinna, for whom the man would give his last breath—why should we have this tabooing some, and letting in others by back doors?"

"You are quite right about your daughter, and have given the precise reason why it would be most objectionable to admit her—as yet, at least. Take my advice, come back later."

Mr. Nagle went away, and repaired straight to Will Gardiner's. He found husband and wife at home, who received him very coldly. Will Gardiner could never disguise resentment where he felt he had been "done."

"I wonder you have come off guard, Nagle," he said. "Some of the relations may slip in during your absence."

"Oh, I am not guarding, or doing anything of that sort. There's fine scheming going on up there, I can tell you—doors locked and barred, and every one asked their business. I never heard of such a thing in my life!"

Mr. Nagle spoke pettishly. Mr. Gardiner saw how things stood; his face wore a broad grin of amusement.

"What, has Master Spooner turned on you—turned you out, my poor professor? Put not your trust in princes, my boy, nor in doctors."

"I tell you what," said Mr. Nagle, solemnly, and not heeding, or, perhaps, understanding these compliments, "my opinion is, there is some scheming on foot there. It's most suspicious. The woman brought in—a regular Cerberus—never sleeps, I believe; locked doors; can't get your foot on the stair."

"But you, my dear Nagle, the bosom friend and pitcher—why no one would believe it! And Miss Corinna—surely she has the pass-key if any one has."

"There's the monstrous part of it," said Mr. Nagle, vehemently. "I appeal to you and Mrs. Gardiner if it wasn't notorious in the place. The man idolises her; and to have the door slammed in her face by a fellow that ought to be grinding his powders in the back shop——"

"Oh," said Mrs. Gardiner, "so she has been trying to visit him. Dear me! how trying for her to have been refused admission."

"No, I didn't mean that," he answered, hastily. "I assure you, no. She hasn't been near the place. In fact, she has a delicacy about it which I think absurd."

"Of course you would not like to have

it said," replied the lady, who, nevertheless, told everywhere how that scheming girl had tried to get in and could not get beyond the hall.

"Well," said Will, enjoying the joke immensely, "it's unfortunate for you, Master Nagle. But, you see, a position like yours is always more or less insecure—perhaps more than less. The only comfort you can have is that poor old Doughty may get well, and then Spooner may be sent to the right-about himself, just as you are."

This was brutal, and Mr. Nagle winced.

"I am not sent to the right-about, as you call it. The danger is the man may not recover, and they may be concocting wills, and deeds, and all sorts of knavery."

"It won't stand," said Will, excitedly. "If I was to spend every halfpenny I have on earth I'll upset it. The relations shall get up a fund, and work heaven and earth. No court would tolerate such an iniquitous game. But do you know, Nagle, in any case things look rather blue for you, my boy. And after all your trouble too!"

"Yes," said the other, "my practice ruined—my professional emoluments dwindled."

"Ruined!" said Mrs. Gardiner, in good-natured surprise. "Why, every one thinks you are coining."

"Oh, that's all very well, ma'am. There's not much to coin in this hole. Why, the slave I have been to that man, and Corinna too, putting up with his humours and jealousies—losing a good match."

"You may thank my Lady Duke for that," said Will. "But you had another crumb of comfort there. She got the sack, if you did——"

"Why, there's the game—the partiality! It's monstrous. Why, Spooner's set her on, and she's sitting with the man this moment."

Will Gardiner started up, his cheeks glowing.

"She got in! Then depend upon it they're in league. I see it all now. A regular plant! Lock up the poor devil, keep out every one that feels well towards him! Poor deserted, demented creature! Heaven help him if he gets into her hands."

"But what's to be done?" said Mrs. Gardiner. "That woman isn't to be tolerated. We have as good a right to be there as she has."

"I tell you what! leave it to my wife, who is a wonderful woman of the world. She'll soon let these people know what she thinks of them."

Mr. Nagle shook his head.

"Oh! you don't know her. She's just

the woman for a situation like this. She'll be a match for them. There'll be no will concocted without her knowing it. And then your Corinna—why, she's a tower of strength—why isn't she with him?"

"Oh, there it is," said Mr. Nagle. "She has got some absurd delicacy in her head about the people, and what they would say: that she was scheming to get his money."

"Nonsense! Why, that's said enough already. Their tongues are never a moment idle. As she's got the credit of it, she might as well have the reality. You should use your authority. These girls require to be ordered."

"To be sure," said the other. "But what can I do with her? She's so high-flown and romantic. Why—would you believe it?—she's going away! Leaving the place!"

Mrs. Gardiner started.

"Going away! When?"

"At once. To-morrow, I believe. Talks of earning her bread, and all that folly."

"Oh, then the game's up. You may draw off, and let the others pillage the poor fellow to their hearts' content."

Mr. Nagle looked frightened.

"Why so? How d'ye mean?"

"Why, my dear Master Nagle, you don't suppose he'd do anything for you. It's for your handsome girl he's been fraternising with you. I suppose you can see that?"

This disagreeable truth had never occurred to the music-master; but it seemed to be put so logically that it flashed upon him now with something like conviction.

"Then it's most ungrateful and selfish."

"I suppose she knows best," said Mrs. Gardiner. "But, you see, there's nothing to be done now. If she were my daughter, I would insist on her remaining, for a time, at least. You have some authority over your children, I suppose?"

"Oh, I am sure I don't know," said Mr. Nagle, in despair. "I suppose they do as they please. That's the cue for the new generation."

Mrs. Gardiner looked at him with some contempt.

"Well, I am sure!" she said, "with such cards in your hand! But no matter. You know your interests best."

"Well, tell me what I am to do," he said, looking from one to the other.

"Well," said Will, "I would make her stay for a short time at least. I suppose she has some natural affection, and will do something for her poor old father. I would work that line to her."

This seemed to comfort the music-master, who seized his hat and set off for his home.

CHAPTER XXXV. THE BARRIER CROSSED.

Not very long after Nagle's departure, Will Gardiner and his wife left their house, and went up to make a fresh attack on the Doughty fortress. It was curious to see the alteration in that honest, open face, an eagerness and restlessness having come into the eyes, and even a worn look on the cheeks. He had become harassed with that one thought, and at home could talk of nothing else. From constant talking, what was a wild day-dream had come to assume first probability, then almost certainty, and this was fed by his oft-repeated assurance to himself and his wife:

"We have as good a chance as any of them. And we have never shown that we wanted the poor fellow's money, or carried him for it."

It was curious how often this description "poor fellow" was introduced as a sort of corrective to the fear of being thought mercenary. But as, in the case of Lady Duke, circumstances had become pressing, and he, too, living beyond his means, was beginning to be in want of money.

It was unfortunate that his more clever wife should have left him on their road to the house to do some shopping; for thus he arrived in a sort of combative mood, which was not likely to advance their interests. He strode in and was walking up-stairs, when he was confronted by the doctor, with the usual mysterious and cautionary manner. At this he lost all patience.

"Now look here, Spooner," he said, "you had better give up this ridiculous game at once. And I tell you plainly, I am not going to put up with it. Am I to understand that you mean to shut me out from seeing our relation Doughty?"

The other was almost servile in his declarations.

"Far from it; as soon as he gets a little strength, I shall be only too happy to admit you. Even if he were to desire to see you, I should make no objection. But the truth is he has never done so."

"I suppose," said Will, with a sneer, "he will only desire to see such persons as are Doctor Spooner's friends. What a curious coincidence! Do you think we are going to stand this nonsense; or do you suppose that every one doesn't see through your schemes? I believe it to be a conspiracy—nothing more or less."

"You are excited," said the other, "but you will not excite me. Mr. Gardiner, your manner and language justify me in saying that you are a most improper person to be admitted to a sick-room where a patient is in so critical a way."

Will Gardiner was beside himself with anger.

"You have no authority here. I shall insist on my right of seeing my friend, whom you may be hocussing between you, for all I know. Let me pass."

Mr. Gardiner had not much self-restraint, and seizing the doctor by the collar, swung him out of his way. Then he hurried upstairs to the bedroom. He had nearly reached the door, when he was confronted by the stern sister, who, with one hand on the banister and another on the wall, barred the way.

"For shame!" she said, coldly; "this is most indecent. Do you want to burst into his room? You will first have to assault me as you have done my brother."

"Stand away, ma'am," said Will, in a rage with himself for having got into such a position. "I suppose you will next spread that about, or tell him that I have done so?"

"Go down, sir," said the doctor, who had now come quietly behind, "or it will be my duty to call in assistance, and have you removed."

"At your peril," said Will, with his hand on the door of the room. "You will not dispose of me so easily, I can tell you."

All at once the door opened, and a pale face looked out, overcast with doubt and astonishment. It was, indeed, a picture, a group from a comedy, and the various characters—for Mrs. Gardiner had now arrived—looked a little humiliated.

"What is this about?" said the patient at last.

Will spoke out bluntly, and with a natural warmth.

"I'm delighted to see you so fresh, Doughty, really delighted. We were told you were at the last extremity, and I was trying to see for myself, only this good gentleman wanted to prevent us."

Mr. Doughty answered with wild eyes, and much excited:

"What are you quarrelling about here? I will not be hunted in this fashion. Go away all of you. I don't want you here. I ought to be delighted to find every one so interested in me!"

The doctor had turned rather pale, but spoke firmly.

"A great responsibility was cast on me, and I was determined, at any risk of misconstruction, to do my duty to my patient."

"Oh, of course," said Mr. Doughty, peevishly. "I know that. Every one wishes to do their duty."

"We would, I know," said Mrs. Gardiner, promptly. "We have been here day after day, but could hardly get beyond the door. Even the poor Nagles," she added, very adroitly, "have been turned back."

The patient started. "Not by my direction. Where are they? When was she here?"

"It is Mr. Nagle this gentleman is speaking of. His daughter has not come."

"Come in," said Mr. Doughty, sharply, to the two Gardiners. "I am ill, very ill. But no one has a right to shut me up in this style. I wanted to talk to you."

"You wait outside, dear," she said to her husband. "Both of us will only tire him; and I can tell him everything he wishes to hear." A wise precaution against the two conspirators listening at the key-hole. To say the truth, Mr. Doughty did not seem to notice the absence of Will Gardiner.

"Now what is this?" he said, when the door was closed. "I know not what has been going on during this illness, but, I fear, much that I cannot be accountable for. Were they complaining to you?"

"Miss Corinna?" said Mrs. Gardiner, delicately assisting him. "No; she is not a girl to do that, especially if she saw there was anything like a combination or that unworthy motives were imputed. That alone would keep her at a distance."

"A cruel delicacy," said he, warmly; "cruel to me, who both like and esteem her. She might, at least, have done what all the rest of the world here seems to have done. I could not, of course, expect her to show that flattering interest in my poor self, which took the shape of the struggle that has just taken place outside; but still a visit, an inquiry, could not have done her much harm."

"I sincerely believe that to have been the sole reason. Perhaps she may think that, after the late business, in which young Mr. Duke behaved so badly, they are all so unkind here."

He was getting more and more interested.

"I can quite understand," he said; "and of course she could hear every day from her father—if she cared to know, that

is—— The people of this place certainly bear her no goodwill."

"She has great enemies," said the lady, "and no one to protect her. Lady Duke bears her no love, and is a very clever woman. No one knows better how to contrive matters. She certainly managed to rescue her son, as she would call it, with great skill. He is not a youth of much strength of mind, and she knows how to direct him without his being aware of it."

Mr. Doughty remained silent, looking at her steadily. "I suspected something of this," he said at length; "and I suppose this is what is repeated in the place."

"Oh yes," she said, eagerly; "and a good deal more."

"Then we must try and set things straight as far as we can. I may not live very long; I am not exactly young, and you know they call me 'Old Doughty.' But I have strength still to show that noble girl what I think of her, and of those who have shown themselves her friends. You and yours, my dear Mrs. Gardiner, have been so from the beginning. It was at your house I first saw her. It was you and your husband that first took notice of the poor unfriended music-master and his daughter. I notice these things, though I may not seem to do so. Her friends shall be my friends. I wish you to know that, and bear it in mind. Those who remember her I shall remember, in the vulgar but satisfactory sense of the word. I think I can depend on you."

"How generous, how noble," said Mrs. Gardiner, hardly able to restrain her delight.

"You have some influence with her, I dare say?" he went on doubtfully. "As you see me here, I am so beleaguered and hedged in with interested people, who, however, may mean that I can find no one whom I can trust. If she would only come to me—if I could see her but for a few moments."

"Nothing more easy in the world," said Mrs. Gardiner, enthusiastically. "I'll undertake to manage it."

"No, no," said he, doubtfully, "it is a delicate matter, and she is so sensitive."

"Leave it all to me. I shall contrive it. It is only proper that she should come, and to one who has shown such a generous interest in her all through. Indeed, as it is," continued Mrs. Gardiner unable to repress

her natural inclination to give a thrust to any fellow-creature of hers when she could, "it surprises me that she should stand aloof in this remarkable way, as though she were afraid of catching the plague. To some people it would seem ungracious; only we, of course, know her."

"You do not," said he, quietly, "and some people—most people indeed—cannot understand these matters. However, if she could be brought to pay one little visit to a poor shattered invalid out of charity, even as a sister of mercy, which she is, I shall be for ever grateful."

Mrs. Gardiner listened to these comforting words with delight and elation. Her tactics, such as they were, had so far been crowned with infinite success. She had struck out the true course. And certainly it would seem—and the reader may think so too—that Lady Duke had made a sad blunder, and joined herself to the weaker party. Corinna and the Gardiners were certainly likely to be more powerful than Lady Duke, the doctor, and his sister.

Mrs. Gardiner came out of the sick-room with triumph, and, in the drawing-room, met Lady Duke, who was waiting for her audience. That lady noticed this air of success, and was troubled. Already she had misgivings, for the news of the successful Gardiner irruption, the carrying the outworks, and sweeping away of the doctor and his sister, had reached her. The enemy was within the gates.

But a fresh rebuff was in store for her. The doctor came down with a sort of rueful face, with word that Mr. Doughty would not see her now. She knew, by a sort of instinct, that "the other woman" had been poisoning his mind, and saying something to her detriment. The Gardiner party had already scored, and there was consternation in the looks of the other side, as the successful lady tripped away to report her success.

But before night arrived another startling piece of news had got abroad. Birkenshaw, the private solicitor of the Gardiners, had gone up to Mr. Doughty—sent, of course, by "that party"—for the purpose of drawing up his last will and testament, by which, of course, all that he had would be given to those miserable Nagles, with a jackal's slice to those Gardiners, who had helped so effectively to secure the spoil. Here was news, indeed!

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 226. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSS AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER LIV. DANGEROUS GROUND.

OLD Mr. Blount was a religious man. Sir Harry, whose ideas upon such subjects I never could exactly divine, went to church every Sunday; but he scoffed at bishops, and neither loved nor trusted clergymen. He had, however, family prayers every morning, at which good Mr. Blount officiated, with evident happiness and peace in the light of his simple countenance.

No radiance of this happy light was reflected on the face of Sir Harry Rokestone, who sat by the mantelpiece, in one of the old oak arm-chairs, a colossal image of solitude, stern and melancholy, and never, it seemed to me, so much alone as at those moments which seem to draw other mortals nearer. I fancied that some associations connected with such simple gatherings long ago, perhaps, recalled mamma to his thoughts; he seemed to sit in a stern and melancholy reverie, and he would often come over to me, when the prayer was ended, and, looking at me with great affection, ask gently:

"Well, my little lass, do they try to make you happy here? Is there anything you think of that you'd like me to get down from Lunnion? You must think. I'd like to be doing little things for you; think, and tell me this evening." And at such times he would turn on me a look of full-hearted affection, and smooth my hair caressingly with his old hand.

Sometimes he would say: "You like his place, you tell me; but the winters here, I'm thinking, will be too hard for you."

"But I like a good, cold, frosty winter,"

I would answer him. "There is nothing I think so pleasant."

"Ay, but maybe ye'll be getting a cough or something."

"No, I assure you I'm one of the few persons on earth who never take cold." I urged, for I really wished to spend the winter at Golden Friars.

"Well, pretty lass, ye shall do as you like best, but you mustn't fall sick; if you do, what's to become o' the anld man?"

You must allow me here to help myself with my diary once more. I am about to quote from what I find there, dated the following Sunday:

"We went to Golden Friars to church as usual; and Mr. Marston, instead of performing his devotions twelve miles away, came with us.

"After the service was ended, Sir Harry, who had a call to make, took leave of us. The day was so fine that we were tempted to walk home instead of driving.

"We chose the path by the lake, and sent the carriage on to Dorraclough.

"Mr. Blount chooses to talk over the sermon, and I am sure thinks it profane to mention secular subjects on Sunday. I think this a mistake; and I confess I was not sorry when good Mr. Blount stopped and told us he was going into Shenstone's cottage. I felt that a respite of five minutes from the echoes of the good vicar's sermon would be pleasant. But when he went on to say that he was going in to read some of the Bible and talk a little with the consumptive little boy, placing me under Mr. Marston's escort for the rest of the walk, which was about a mile, I experienced a new alarm. I had no wish that Mr. Marston should return to his old heroics.

"I did not well know what to say or do,

Mr. Blount's good-bye came so suddenly. My making a difficulty about walking home with Mr. Marston would to him, who knew nothing of what had passed at Malory, have appeared an unaccountable affectation of prudery. I asked Mr. Blount whether he intended staying any time. He answered, half an hour at least, 'and if the poor boy wishes it, I shall stay an hour,' he added.

"Mr. Marston, who, I am sure, perfectly understood me, did not say a word. I had only to make the best of an uncomfortable situation, and, very nervous, I nodded and smiled my farewell to Mr. Blount, and set out on my homeward march with Mr. Marston.

"I need not have been in such a panic; it was very soon perfectly plain that Mr. Marston did not intend treating me to any heroics.

" 'I don't know any one in the world I have a much higher opinion of than Mr. Blount,' he said, 'but I do think it a great mercy to get away from him a little on Sundays; I can't talk to him in his own way, and I turn simply into a Trappist; I become, I mean, perfectly dumb.'

"I agreed, but said that I had such a regard for Mr. Blount that I could not bring myself to vex him.

" 'That is my rule also,' he said, 'only I carry it a little further, ever since I received my education,' he smiled, darkly; 'that is, since I began to suffer, about three years ago, I have learned to practise it with all my friends. You would not believe what constraint I often place upon myself to avoid saying that which is in my heart and next my lips, but which I fear—I fear with too good reason—might not be liked by others. There was a time, I dare say, when Hamlet blurted out everything that came into his mind, before he learned in the school of sorrow to say, "but break my heart, for I must hold my tongue."'

"He looked very expressively, and I thought I knew perfectly what he meant, and that if by any blunder I happened to say a foolish thing, I might find myself, before I knew where I was, in the midst of a conversation as wild as that of the wood of Plas Ylwd.

"In reply to this I said, not very adroitly:

" 'And what a beautiful play Hamlet is! I have been trying to copy Retsch's outlines, but I have made such a failure. The faces are so fine and forcible, and the expression of the hands is so wonderful, and my hands are so tame and clumsy; I can

do nothing but the ghost, and that is because he is the only absurd figure in the series.'

" 'Yes,' he acquiesced, 'like a thing in an opera bouffe.'

"I could perceive very plainly that my rather precipitate and incoherent excursion into Retsch's outlines, into which he had followed me with the best grace he could, had wounded him. It was equally plain, however, that he was in good faith practising the rule he had just now mentioned, and was by no means the insolent and overbearing suitor he had shown himself in that scene, now removed alike by time and distance, in which I had before seen him.

"Nothing could be more submissive than he to my distinct decision that there was to be no more such wild talk.

"For the rest of our walk he talked upon totally indifferent subjects. Certainly, of the two, I had been the most put out by his momentary ascent to a more tragic level.

"I wonder now whether I did not possibly suspect a great deal more than was intended. If so, what a fool I must have appeared! Is there anything so ridiculous as a demonstration of resistance where no attack is meditated? I began to feel so confused and ashamed that I hardly took the trouble to follow what he said. As we approached Dorracleugh, however, I began to feel more like myself. After a little silence he said what I am going to set down; I have gone over it again and again in my mind; I know I have added nothing, and I really think I write it very nearly exactly as he spoke it.

" 'When I had that strange escape with my life from the Conway Castle,' he said, 'no man on earth was more willing and less fit to die than I. I don't suppose there was a more miserable man in England. I had disappointed my uncle by doing what seemed a very foolish thing. I could not tell him my motive; no one knew it; the secret was not mine; everything combined to embarrass and crush me. I had the hardest thing on earth to endure; unmerited condemnation was my portion. Some good people whom, notwithstanding, I have learned to respect, spoke of me to my face as if I had committed a murder. My uncle understands me now, but he has not yet forgiven me. When I was at Malory, I was in a mood to shoot myself through the head; I was desperate, I was bitter, I was furious. Every unlucky thing that could happen did happen there. The

very people who had judged me most cruelly turned up; and among them one who forced a quarrel on me, and compelled that miserable duel, in which I wished at the time I had been killed myself.

"I listened to all this with more interest than I allowed him to see, as we walked on together side by side, I looking down on the path before us, and saying nothing.

"If it were not for one or two feelings left me, I should not know myself for the shipwrecked man who thanked his young hostess at Malory for her invaluable hospitality," he said; "there are some things one never forgets. I often think of Malory; I have thought of it in all kinds of distant, out-of-the-way, savage places; it rises before me, as I saw it last. My life has all gone wrong. While hope remains, we can bear anything; but my last hope seems pretty near its setting; and, when it is out, I hope, seeing I cross and return in all weathers, there is drowning enough in that lake to give a poor fool, at last, a cool head and a quiet heart."

"Then, without any tragic pause, he turned to other things, lightly; and never looked towards me to discover what effect his words were producing; but he talked on, and, now, very pleasantly. We loitered a little at the hall-door. I did not want him to come into the drawing-room, and establish himself there. Here were the open door, the hall, the court-yard, the windows, all manner of possibilities for listeners, and I felt I was protected from any embarrassment that an impetuous companion might please to inflict if favoured by a tête-à-tête.

"I must, however, do him justice; he seemed very anxious not to offend; very careful so to mask any disclosure of his feelings, as to leave me quite free to 'ignore' it; and, as it seemed to me, on the watch to catch any evidence of my impatience.

"He is certainly very agreeable and odd; and the time passed very pleasantly while we loitered in the court-yard.

"Mr. Blount soon came up, and after a word or two, I left them, and ran up to my room."

CHAPTER LV. MR. CARMEL TAKES HIS LEAVE.

ABOUT this time there was a sort of fête at Golden Friars. Three very pretty fountains were built by Sir Richard Mardykes and Sir Harry, at the upper end of the town, in which they both have property; and the opening of these was a sort of gala.

I did not care to go. Sir Harry Rokestone and Mr. Blount were, of course, there; Mr. Marston went, instead, to his farm, at the other side; and I took a whim to go out on the lake, in a row-boat, in the direction of Golden Friars. My boatmen rowed me near enough to hear the music, which was very pretty; but we remained sufficiently far out, to prevent becoming mixed up with the other boats which lay near the shore.

It was a pleasant, clear day, with no wind stirring, and although we were now fairly in winter, the air was not too sharp, and with just a rug about one's feet, the weather was very pleasant.

My journal speaks of this evening as follows:

"It was, I think, near four o'clock, when I told the men to row towards Dorraclough. Before we reached it, the filmy haze of a winter's evening began to steal over the landscape, and a red sunset streamed through the break in the fells above the town with so lovely an effect, that I told the men to slacken their speed. So we moved, with only a dip of the oar, now and then; and I looked up the mere, enjoying the magical effect.

"A boat had been coming, a little in our wake, along the shore; I had observed it, but without the slightest curiosity; not even with a conjecture that Sir Harry and Mr. Blount might be returning in it, for I knew that it was arranged that they were to come back together in the carriage.

"Voices from this boat caught my ear; and one suddenly, that startled me, just as it neared us. It glided up. I fancy about thirty yards were between the sides of the two boats; and the men, like those in my boat, had plainly been ordered merely to dip their oars, and were now moving abreast of ours; the drips from their oars sparkled like drops of molten metal. What I heard—the only thing I now heard—was the harsh nasal voice of Monsieur Droquille.

"There he was, in his black dress, standing in the stern of the boat, looking round on the landscape, from point to point. The light, as he looked this way and that, touched his energetic bronzed features, the folds of his dress, and the wet planks of the boat, with a fire that contrasted with the grey shadows behind and about.

"I heard him say, pointing with his outstretched arm, 'And is that Dorraclough?' To which one of the people in the boat made him an answer.

"I can't think of that question without

terror. What has brought that man down here? What interest can he have in seeking out Dorracleugh, except that it happens to be my present place of abode?

"I am sure he did not see me. When he looked in my direction, the sun was in his eyes, and my face in shadow; I don't think he can have seen me. But that matters nothing if he has come down for any purpose connected with me."

A sure instinct told me that Monsieur Droqville would be directed inflexibly by the interests of his order, to consult which, at all times, unawed by consequences to himself or others, was his stern and narrow duty.

Here, in this beautiful and sequestered corner of the world, how far, after all, I had been from quiet! Well might I cry with Campbell's exile—

Ah! cruel fate, wilt thou never replace me
In a mansion of peace where no perils can chase me.

My terrors hung upon a secret I dared not disclose. There was no one to help me; for I could consult no one.

The next day I was really ill. I remained in my room. I thought Monsieur Droqville would come to claim an interview; and perhaps would seek, by the power he possessed, to force me to become an instrument in forwarding some of his plans, affecting either the faith or the property of others. I was in an agony of suspense and fear.

Days passed; a week; and no sign of Monsieur Droqville. I began to breathe. He was not a man, I knew, to waste weeks, or even days, in search of the picturesque, in a semi-barbarous region like Golden Friars.

At length I summoned courage to speak to Rebecca Torkill. I told her I had seen Monsieur Droqville, and that I wanted her, without telling the servants at Dorracleugh, to make inquiry at the George and Dragon, whether a person answering that description had been there. No such person was there.

So, I might assume, he was gone. He had come with Sir Richard Mardykes, I conjectured, from Carsbrook, where he often was. But such a man was not likely to make even a pleasure excursion, without an eye to business. He had, I supposed, made inquiries; possibly, he had set a watch upon me. Under the eye of such a master of strategy as Monsieur Droqville I could not feel quite at ease.

Nevertheless, in a little time, such serenity as I had enjoyed at Dorracleugh, gradually returned; and I enjoyed a routine

life, the dulness of which would have been in another state of my spirits insupportable, with very real pleasure.

We were now deep in winter; and in its snowy shroud how beautiful the landscape looked! Cold, but stimulating and pleasant was the clear, dry air; and our frost-bound world sparkled in the wintry sun.

Old Sir Harry Rokestone, a keen sportsman, proof as granite against cold, was out by moonlight on the grey down with his old-fashioned duck-guns, and, when the lake was not frozen over, with two hardy men manœuvring his boat for him. Town-bred Mr. Blount contented himself with his brisk walk, stick in hand, and a couple of the dogs for companions to the town, and Mr. Marston was away upon some mission, on which his uncle had sent him, Mr. Blount said, to try whether he was "capable of business and steady."

One night, at this time, as I sat alone in the drawing-room, I was a little surprised to see old Rebecca Torkill come in with her bonnet and cloak on, looking mysterious and important. Shutting the door, she peeped cautiously round.

"What do you think, miss? Wait; listen," she all but whispered, with her hand raised, as she trotted up to my side. "Who do you think I saw, not three minutes ago, at the lime-trees, near the lake?"

I was staring in her face, filled with shapeless alarms.

"I was coming home from Farmer Shenstone's, where I went with some tea for that poor little boy that's ailing, and just as I got over the stile, who should I see, as plain as I see you now, but Mr. Carmel, just that minute got out of his boat, and making as if he was going to walk up to the house. He knew me the minute he saw me—it is a very bright moon—and he asked me how I was; and then, how you were, most particular; and he said he was only for a few hours in Golden Friars, and took a boat on the chance of seeing you for a minute, but that he did not know whether you would like it, and he begged of me to find out and bring him word. If you do he's waiting down there, Miss Ethel, and what shall I say?"

"Come with me," I said, getting up quickly; and, putting on in a moment my seal-skin jacket and my hat, without another thought or word, much to Rebecca's amazement, I sallied out into the still night air. Turning the corner of the old building, at the end of the court-yard,

I found myself treading with rapid steps the crisp grass, under a dazzling moon, and before me the view of the distant fells, throwing their snowy peaks high into the air, with the solemn darkness of the lake, and its silvery gleams below, and the shadowy gorge and great lime-trees in the foreground. Down the gentle slope I walked swiftly, leaving Rebecca Torkill a long way behind.

I was now under the towering lime-trees. I paused; with a throbbing heart I held my breath. I heard hollow steps coming up on the other side of the file of gigantic stems. I passed between, and saw Mr. Carmel walking slowly toward me. In a moment he was close to me, and took my hand in his old kindly way.

"This is very kind; how can I thank you, Miss Ware? I had hardly hoped to be allowed to call at the house; I am going a long journey, and have not been quite so well as I used to be, and I thought that if I lost this opportunity, in this uncertain world I might never see my pupil again. I could hardly bear that, without just saying good-bye."

"And you are going?" I said, wringing his hand.

"Yes, indeed; the ocean will be between us soon, and half the world, and I am not to return."

All his kindness rose up before me—his thoughtful goodness, his fidelity—and I felt for a moment on the point of crying.

He was muffled in furs, and was looking thin and ill, and in the light of the moon the lines of his handsome face were marked, as if carved in ivory.

"You and your old tutor have had a great many quarrels, and always made it up again; and now at last we part, I am sure, good friends."

"You are going, and you're ill," was all I could say; but I was conscious there was something of that wild tone that real sorrow gives in my voice.

"How often I have thought of you, Miss Ethel—how often I shall think of you, be my days many or few. How often!"

"I am so sorry, Mr. Carmel—so awfully sorry!" I repeated. I had not unclasped my hand; I was looking in his thin, pale, smiling face, with the saddest augury.

"I want you to remember me; it is folly, I know, but it is a harmless folly; all human nature shares in it, and"—there was a little tremble, and a momentary interruption—"and your old tutor, the sage who lectured you so wisely, is, after all, no

this little cross? It belonged to my mother, and is, by permission of my superiors, my own, so you may accept it with a clear conscience," he smiled. "If you wear it, or even let it lie upon your table, it will sometimes"—the same momentary interruption occurred again—"it may perhaps remind you of one who took a deep interest in you."

It was a beautiful little gold cross, with five brilliants in it.

"And oh, Ethel! let me look at you once again."

He led me—it was only a step or two—out of the shadow of the tree into the bright moonlight, and, still holding my hand, looked at me intently for a little time with a smile, to me, the saddest that ever mortal face wore.

"And now, here she stands, my wayward, generous, clever Ethel! How proud I was of my pupil! The heart knoweth its own bitterness," he said, gently. "And oh! in the day when our Redeemer makes up his jewels, may you be precious among them. I have seen you; farewell."

Suddenly he raised my hand, and kissed it gently, twice. Then he turned, and walked rapidly down to the water's edge, and stepped into the boat. The men dipped their oars, and the water rose like diamonds from the touch. I saw his dark figure standing, with arm extended, for a moment, in the stern, in his black cloak, pointing towards Golden Friars. The boat was now three lengths away; twenty; fifty; out on the bosom of the stirless water. The tears that I had restrained burst forth, and sobbing as if my heart would break I ran down to the margin of the lake, and stood upon the broad, flat stone, and waved my hand wildly and unseen towards my friend, whom I knew I was never to see again.

I stood there watching, till the shape of the boat and the sound of the oars were quite lost in the grey distance.

IN SEARCH OF "BEGGAR SMITH."

I was lately told that the poor people of a large district of Surrey, between places so remote from each other as Richmond and Guildford, inclusive of Wandsworth, Mortlake, Putney, Barnes, Croydon, Epsom, Reigate, Mickleham, Dorking, and a score of other towns and villages, were in the enjoyment of considerable benefactions bequeathed to them by a gentleman—no,

but a man of the name of Smith, who lived in the reigns of James the First and Charles the First. I was told that this particular Mr. Smith was a beggar; that he was known all over the country as "Beggar Smith;" and that, instead of leaving any money to Leatherhead, he had bequeathed a whip to that parish, because he had been whipped out of it; and that, to the neighbouring parish of Ashted, he had left a bridle for the mouths of the scolds and viragos, who, instead of bestowing alms upon him, had refused to "moderate the rancour of their tongues," whenever he made his appearance in their pleasant village. "Beggar Smith" was represented as having left money enough to render a poor-rate unnecessary in the districts over which it was his pleasure to scatter his bounty. I asked if Smith was a licensed beggar? My informant could not say. But, if Smith were a licensed beggar, the town of Leatherhead would have had no right to whip him, so that my supposition and the legend did not tally well together. Anyhow, as I lived in one of the parishes benefited, I resolved to make inquiries in re Mr. Smith, and ascertain, if possible, the sum he had left, and whether or no he had really been a beggar, as tradition affirmed.

I first got scent of Smith at Epsom, where a venerable pauper, out on leave from the union workhouse, told me he knew summut about "Beggar Smith." His bounties were distributed to the poor of the town at Christmas, and amounted, he thought, to as much as forty-seven pounds per annum. "Was he a beggar?" "Yes, Smith was a beggar, there was no mistake about that; leastways, he had always heard so. Ax anybody you like who knows anything, and they'll tell you that he was whipped for begging, and a great shame too. Besides, anybody could find out all about Smith by just going into the vestry-room at St. Martin's church, where his will was framed and glazed, and stuck up on the wall, with his name to it in letters of gold." He would show me the church if I liked, for the price of a pint o' beer. "He hadn't tasted beer for a long time, and a drop would do him good." This modest bargain having been struck, we made our way to the church, where the organist was busy tuning the organ, and easily procured admission to the vestry-room. The document of which I was in search hung upon the wall, in a dark corner, but by mounting on an antique chest, or muniment box, of carved oak, I was enabled to read that it set

forth the particulars of a voluntary gift which had been made in his lifetime to the poor of Epsom, by Henry Smith, and that it was dated on the 16th of January, in the second year of the reign of His Most Gracious Majesty James the First, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland (1604). On referring that same afternoon to the folio History of the County of Surrey, I learned from its pages in a curt entry, that Henry Smith, Esquire, by a will dated in 1627, had bequeathed large sums, derived from the rental of certain farms and estates in the county of Sussex, to the poor of certain parishes in Surrey. Whatever might be thought of the will, it did not look much like the act of a beggar to be giving away, with splendid liberality, his worldly goods and possessions during his lifetime for the benefit of the poor. The more I thought upon the matter, the more I became convinced that, beggar or no beggar, Henry Smith was no common man, but a philanthropist who did his own good in his own lifetime, and did not wait to be generous till he lay on his death-bed. I heard more about him afterwards in the parish of Mickleham, where the money of "Beggar Smith," if beggar he were, continued to be employed, in 1872, in relieving the distresses of the aged and infirm poor, and in other meritorious actions.

In Dorking the same story was told of the benefactions of the worthy man whom everybody persisted in calling a beggar. All through the country the poor had heard of and benefited by his bounty. The poor invariably supported their assertion of his beggarhood by citing as proof positive the "whip" which he had bequeathed to Leatherhead, and the bridle, or, according to some, the "gag," left for the benefit of the gossips of Ashted. But people of a superior rank in life, when asked what authority there was for these stories, generally admitted that there was none, except tradition. By a gentleman learned in the law I was informed that Smith had in the year 1620, sixteen years after his gift to the poor of Epsom, executed a "deed of uses," and that a decree of the Court of Chancery had been given concerning the same, in which Henry Smith, Esquire, was plaintiff, and the Most Noble the Earl of Essex, and others, were defendants. These documents it appeared had been reprinted from time to time during the last two hundred and fifty years for the guidance of the authorities of the several parishes interested, together with the last will and testament of

Henry Smith, dated, as I have said, in 1627, the year in which he died. These documents I succeeded in obtaining, and found that they threw great light on the benevolent character of Smith, who, beggar or no beggar, had acted for the last twenty-seven years of his life the part of a singularly unselfish and high-minded gentleman.

It does not appear of what business or profession he was, but it is clear that he possessed a "mansion" in Silver-street, in the parish of St. Olave's, Southwark. Several noble and eminent persons were indebted to him in large sums of money, and he was the owner in fee-simple of the manors and farms of Warbleton, Southwick, and Iwood (or Highwood) with their appurtenances, in the county of Sussex, and other manors, lands, tenements, and hereditaments in the county of Middlesex. Looking at the sums he lent to some members of the aristocracy of the period, it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that he was a money-lender by profession. Among the persons indebted to him were the Earl of Essex, ten thousand pounds; Sir Edward Francis, three thousand pounds; John Middleton, Esquire, four thousand pounds; Sir Richard Lumley, one thousand pounds; and Mr. Serjeant Amburst, one thousand pounds. Henry Smith—unlike too many who have clung to their money to the last moments of their lives, and left large charities and benefactions to the poor after death, often to the exclusion of their own families—did not make his generosity posthumous, but freely gave up his whole estate into the hands of trustees for the immediate relief of want and suffering. He reserved to himself for his residence during life his mansion in Silver-street; kept possession of one hundred pounds in ready money to help him along till his own small share of his own rents became due to him, and stipulated that he should be regularly paid by his trustees the sum of five hundred pounds per annum for his maintenance. All the rest of his fortune he freely and unreservedly gave up to the poor, charging his trustees, thirteen in number, among whom were the Earls of Essex and Dorset, to see that his intentions were duly carried out. These intentions were set forth in the deed of uses:—The relief of poor prisoners, and of hurt and maimed soldiers; the giving of marriage portions to poor maids; the apprenticing of poor lads to useful trades; the relief of persons who had sustained loss by shipwreck or fire, or any other charitable purposes whatsoever that should seem desirable to any seven or

greater number of his trustees. As the interest of the debts due to him was amply sufficient to provide the five hundred pounds per annum which he reserved for himself, it follows that all the rents of his farms and manors and other landed property were handed over to the poor and suffering, to be administered by the noblemen and gentlemen in whom he had placed his confidence. For the better carrying out of his purpose, he directed that his trustees, the Earl of Essex, Sir Christopher Nevil, Sir Richard Lumley, Sir George Croke, and nine others, "should with all convenient speed procure from his majesty, his heirs and successors, a license under the Great Seal of England, to be granted to the Governors of Christ's Hospital in London, and their successors, to receive and take in mortmain, the rents, moneys, and personal estates of the said Henry Smith, to purchase farms, manors, messuages, tenements, hereditaments, &c., the proceeds and rents of which to be distributed in the same way as the rents accruing from his three manors and farms of Warbleton, Smithwick, and Iwood." While defining more particularly the classes of people whom he intended to benefit, he made limitations to exclude the criminal and the undeserving. As an instruction to the churchwardens and overseers of the several parishes included, or to be included, within the ever-widening scope of his charity, he declared that his bounty was intended for the relief of aged, poor, and infirm people; of married persons having more children born to them in lawful wedlock than their labours could maintain; of poor orphans; of such poor people as kept themselves and their families to honest labour, without receipt of parish aid; and for apprenticing of their children at the age of fifteen. He expressly excluded all persons leading criminal lives, or who were guilty of excessive drinking, all common swearers and pilferers, and servants who had been incorrigibly disobedient to their masters and mistresses, all vagrants who had no constant dwelling, and able-bodied persons who refused to work when work was provided for them.

Such were the voluntary gifts of Henry Smith to his fellow-creatures during twenty-three years before he died. It does not appear, though he had allowed himself five hundred pounds a year, that he lived up to his income, for in 1627, having disposed of everything but his dwelling-house and his annuity, he executed a will, by which he left many other large

sums for charitable purposes, and as tokens of goodwill to his friends and dependents. He was apparently unmarried, as he left one thousand pounds to his poor relations—meaning thereby his sister's children—and appointed his nephew, one Henry Jackson, a grocer, to be his executor. To Henry Steven Gent, his servant, he left one hundred pounds; to the poor captives, who had been made slaves by the Turkish (probably Algerine) pirates, one thousand pounds, to be invested in such a manner, by the lord mayor and sheriffs of London, as to produce sixty pounds per annum; to the children of one Daborre, a carpenter in Richmond, fifty pounds; to Richard Owen, "gentleman servant," or valet to the Dean of Westminster, one hundred pounds; to the poor of Wandsworth, five hundred pounds; to the poor of Reigate, one thousand pounds; to the child of his servant, Michael Montgomery, ten pounds; and to other two of his servants an annuity of ten pounds each. He forgave John Walker, of Billingsgate, a debt of two hundred pounds, money lent, and bequeathed two hundred pounds to the Countess of Dorset. Several sums due to him, amounting to nearly ten thousand pounds—apparently a portion of the unpaid debts of the Earl of Essex and others—he left for the purchasing and buying in of appropriations for the relief and maintenance of godly preachers, and the better furtherance of knowledge and religion. To the parish of St. Olave's, where he resided, he only left five pounds, and to the parishes of St. Dunstan's-in-the-East and St. Anne's, each the same sum. To the Dowager Lady Delaware he bequeathed one hundred pounds, and to his nephew and executor, Henry Jackson, the grocer, the same sum. To a person whom he called "Good wife Seabright" he left twenty shillings only—a small sum, if she deserved to be called "good," and had in any way shown her goodness to himself. To the poor of Richmond, in Surrey, he devised one thousand pounds, owing to him by Serjeant Amhurst—a fact which strengthens the suspicion that the said Amhurst, as well as the Earl of Essex and the other debtors, had not discharged themselves of their liabilities, between the time of the deed of uses and the execution of the will. A succeeding passage in the will shows clearly that his other debtors, Sir Edward Francis, John Middleton, Esquire, and Sir Richard Lumley, had also neglected to pay up, on the erroneous belief that it was his intention to release them. He

therefore asserted emphatically that such was by no means his intention, and directed his executors to demand and require of them, and of the Earl of Essex, the punctual repayment, with interest, of all advances made to them. Between the date of the deed of uses and the execution of the will he had acquired estates, manors, and messuages in the counties of Kent, Gloucester, and Worcester, the rents of which he also devoted to the general purposes of his trust. But as his free gifts, according to the directions of his deed of uses, had not been administered according to his intention by the trustees, he revoked in his will all former wills and testaments, and all former trusts, grants, gifts, assurances, conveyances, and powers whatsoever touching or concerning his said lands, goods, moneys, &c., and appointed Alderman Whitmore, of London, his nephew, Henry Jackson, the grocer, and four other persons to be his executors, "earnestly praying them to be careful" in seeing that there should be no further mistakes.

In a codicil, in which he bequeathed one thousand pounds to his nephew, Jackson, it appears that the will, which was proved on the 20th of June, 1628, makes no mention of the "whip" said to have been bequeathed to Leatherhead, nor of the "gag" or "bridle" to Ashtead, so that the general tradition of the county rests on no better foundation than a fairy tale. Nevertheless, it is possible that Smith, in his early life, may have been a beggar, as tradition affirms, and may have inherited unexpectedly, from some distant relative, the ample fortune of which he made in later life such benevolent use. A legend so widely spread must have had some sort of foundation. Smith may have jocularly expressed his intention of making the fabulous Leatherhead and Ashtead bequests, and thus given currency to a piece of gossip, which, by constant reiteration during nine generations of paupers, has gradually hardened itself in popular belief into the consistency of a fact. It might be interesting to ascertain how much of Smith's money, during all these generations, has found its way into the hands of the lawyers, or has been diverted from the uses of the poor by the expenses of management. It might also be a fair subject of inquiry whether the gifts have not more greatly tended to demoralise than to elevate the persons for whose benefit they were intended. An old woman of seventy in my parish receives ten shillings annually, and expends it regularly on a Christmas joint, a plum-pudding, and a bottle of gin.

Perhaps none but a teetotaler would see any harm in this old lady's festivities at Mr. Smith's expense. And if Smith's money were wholly devoted to the relief of the aged, the infirm, and the suffering poor, and went in diminution of the poor-rates, all but the hardest and rigidest of political economists might smile approval. The estate, which the manipulation of the law has rendered much less productive than it might have been, is administered by the Charity Commissioners under the authority of the Court of Chancery, and is not likely to suffer any further diminution.

THE MODERN ROMAN.

UPON entering what were once the Roman States, after crossing either the late Tuscan or Neapolitan frontier, the traveller will remark a change in the countenances of the people as striking as if he had passed from a seaport to a manufacturing town. Nor can he help observing, that the alteration visible in the appearance of the inhabitants is as great as the difference in the face of the respective regions. In either case, he has left a rich and highly cultivated district for a scene of neglect and desolation. He has lost the cheerful look and sunburnt features of active industry, to meet too often the yellow hue of disease and the listless lounge of indolence.

The first walk which a stranger takes within the walls of Rome itself, will also show that perfect health is much more rarely to be met with here than in any of the neighbouring cities. The peasantry, indeed, who are to be seen attending market in the Piazza Navona or the Piazza della Rotonda, are tolerably robust, well-conditioned fellows. But stroll through the more densely inhabited districts—the Campo Marzo, for instance—observe the squalid, sallow look of half the population, listen to the wheezing cough of one old man, mark the agueish shiver of another—and thank Heaven that you are able to pay a mere visit to Rome, instead of being obliged to make it your constant residence.

Fevers during the summer are notoriously endemic in Rome: and the fear of them is so great that on grand public occasions—such as the Carnival, a ceremony at St. Peter's, or anything of that kind—persons are to be seen, mixing with the crowd, having their nostrils stuffed with the leaves of aromatic herbs, as a preventive against infection. Towards the approach

of Christmas, numbers, particularly old people, are carried off by inflammation of the chest, occasioned by the keen and frosty evenings, to which their constitutions are so little inured, and which their dwellings are so little able to resist.

The experience of a week is sufficient to prove that Rome contains an unusual proportion of dwarfs and deformed persons; and as the Italians are almost universally a handsome race, the fact is, perhaps, to be accounted for by the Roman custom of bandaging infants. The little image of our Saviour, *Il Santo Bambino*, which is exposed to the reverence of the public on the Epiphany or *Festa dei tre Rè*, at the church of Santa Maria in Araceli, and elsewhere, is an exact model of the Roman method of swathing infants, except that it has a crown on its head and that the tips of its toes are uncovered. How far this costume is a correct representation of the swaddling clothes mentioned in the Holy Scriptures, learned antiquaries must determine.

The poor little creature, soon after its birth, is swathed up, as far as the very arm-pits, in innumerable folds of linen, which seem to fit it as closely and as inflexibly as the casing of an Egyptian mummy. How often the infant is released from this imprisonment, we cannot tell. While it remains there, it can just move its arms and turn its little head from side to side. But as to any of those kicks or springs by which children in the nurse's arms are accustomed, with us, to try their strength and develop their muscles, they are utterly impracticable. With such a physical education, the wonder is that the populace of Rome should be able to display so many straight forms and well-made figures as it really can turn out.

As streets and markets are the places to which we must resort to obtain a correct notion of the outward condition of the lower classes, so private balls and the Opera House will exhibit fair specimens of the higher orders. And here, it must be confessed, we generally find a most pleasing spectacle. Wherever we look, both men and women with great personal attractions are to be seen in numbers. Handsome men and beautiful women are anything but rarities. In fact, one may venture to opine—although it may appear rank heresy—that Italian women are the most beautiful creatures in the world, and that the Roman ladies are the most beautiful women in Italy. The men in Florence and the women in Rome are amongst the noblest specimens of the human race. True it is that, as the

ladies advance in life, they are apt to become a little full-blown, but still they seldom lose the fineness of their extremities or degenerate into mere fatness.

Such, however, is not the case with the lower orders. In the south, the extreme classes of society are marked by differences even more distinctive than they are in England. While the lady of high degree merely grows a little heavier with the increase of her days, the female peasant becomes frequently frightful to see. Hard labour, low diet, violent passions, and exposure to a scorching sun, in a few years produce a change that is scarcely to be credited. The round cheek of the maiden soon becomes channelled with wrinkles; its healthy tint of clear olive-brown is exchanged for hues of gamboge and burnt-umber; and the person who, in her youth, possessed no small share of beauty, stands before you a hag of indescribable hideousness.

Parini, in his mock-heroic poem, *Il Matino, Il Mezzo-giorno, Il Vespero, e La Notte*—Morning, Noon, Evening, and Night, has given a very particular and entertaining account of the manner in which a Roman fashionable of his time spent the day; and it is still well worth studying.

Parini begins with the Morning, and tells us that the Roman exquisite awakes late, having stayed late at some supper or ball. While still in bed his dandy valet steals in to ask whether he please to take chocolate or coffee. If inclined to be stout, he orders coffee; but if leanness be his tendency, he calls for chocolate, happy if, while drinking it, no dun of a tailor is announced, to demand with infinite politeness the payment of his bill. This wretch despatched, more welcome visitors enter. The French master, the musician, and the dancer, each struggle for the happiness of lecturing on his respective art, while our signore quietly sips his coffee and asks the news. Having thus gossiped away and got rid of so large a portion of the morning, he dismisses his professors, intending to take a lesson to-morrow or the next day. The vulgar, who see these learned men daily passing and repassing through the gate of his palazzo, admire his proficiency accordingly. And now that he can no longer bear to lounge in bed, he rises. And in this manner Parini follows his hero through his daily life.

Parini's poem may be a faithful picture; and as it is written with great humour and cleverness, the reader cannot avoid being amused by it. But still it gives no more insight into popular manners than one of our

ultra-fashionable or ultra-sensational novels does into those of the great mass of English society. It is therefore unsatisfactory, after all, and the observer who is fond of studying national traits will naturally look for something more. Now there are features in the modern Roman character so prominent that those who run may read. And, first, we will get rid of the ungracious part of our office, and mention those points which we would gladly pass in silence.

The modern Roman, then, the man of the people, is grasping. In money transactions he has no conscience whatever. If you present him with a *douceur* or tip, as a reward for any service, he will pretend to be dissatisfied, although you may have given him double what he has a right to expect. Instead of showing himself grateful for your liberality, he will remain standing before you with a downcast air, and grumble, "*E poco*," "it is little," in order to extort more from your good nature. In selling or bargaining, he will ask twice as much for an article as it is worth, and as he intends to take. Moreover, when detected and resisted, he displays no sense of shame—for it is the practice of his country—but immediately closes with your offer, and allows its justness. A stranger who could not speak either French or Italian with tolerable fluency, and was not well acquainted with the local value of commodities, would be sure to pay for everything considerably more per cent than he ought. "*Prezzi fissi*," "fixed prices," is often labelled up against a shop window, in order to entice Englishmen to enter. It really does spare a great waste of time and temper; since, otherwise, it would be necessary to go through an indefinite quantity of bargaining before arriving at the real selling price. But the Romans consider themselves to be, and really are, pure in this respect, when compared with the Neapolitan professors of the art of fleecing.

He is untruthful. When he opens his mouth to speak, you can never be sure that truth will proceed from it. Here, again, the frequency of the offence takes away from the disgrace which is ordinarily attached to it. He is not surprised if you disbelieve his statements; and he entertains a high opinion of your acuteness when you contradict his most solemn assertions.

He is pusillanimous, except when excited. Why else should two or three assassins be occasionally able to brave the whole population? Why else should certain localities be avoided with terror in a

city containing a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants? When Romans turn brigands (which now and then is the case), they always scour the country in troops incomparably larger than the party they intend to attack, overwhelming them by their numbers, rather than by their bravery.

He is illiterate, which is not his fault. Few among the lower classes can either read or write. Public scribes and letter-writers are to be seen sitting before their tables in the open air, with groups of peasants or artisans collected round them, dictating what they wish to have expressed. Even the parochial clergy are not so well educated as we should expect them to be, and they occasionally produce amusing specimens of Latinity. On a marble slab outside the church at Murino, a small town within a short ride of Rome, is engraved the inscription "Orate pro animabus defunctorum." Even in writing Italian, few Romans spell their language correctly. A bill or a letter from respectable persons of the middle class in Rome, frequently abounds with orthographical if not with grammatical errors.

He is superstitious and credulous, an easy consequence of the former defect. Books might be written to illustrate this point. Living, until quite lately, under a government which may almost be called a theocracy, and closely watched by a numerous priesthood, it is scarcely possible that he should be other than he is. Therefore it is that he annually takes his horses and asses to the church of St. Anthony, to be blessed and prayed over and sprinkled with holy water. Therefore it is that in another church a black stone, with two or three holes in it, said to be the marks of the Evil One's fingers, is believed to have been thrown in at the window by him, in order to destroy a holy Dominican friar. What can we wonder at in a country where the late sovereign put himself on an equality with the Divinity, and where a pope builds a bridge inscribing it "Providentiâ Pii Sexti," "by the Providence of Pius the Sixth;" and where a watch-house or police-station close by is entitled "Posto Militare ai due Santi," "Military Post at the sign of the Two Saints?"

He is indolent, and his indolence is an illustration of the adage that lazy people take the most pains; for his laziness is often the cause of ingenious contrivances to save trouble, which are peculiar to the country. To avoid going up-stairs and down to fetch water, he fastens a wire from his window to the well or fountain in

the court-yard, and runs a vessel along it with a pulley and string. His ferry-boats cross the stream without any labour, being propelled by the current striking against the side of the vessel fastened to a long rope, upon the same principle of the resolution of forces by which a kite is made to fly in the air. He fishes with a net which is worked, like a water-wheel, by the stream, and sits quietly by, waiting with patience for whatever luck may chance to bring him. He is also a great gambler in the numerous lotteries encouraged by his late priestly government, and will continue to be so, if allowed by his new ruler, Victor Emmanuel; because if he could get money in this way, it would be a very easy method of becoming rich.

We are glad to have done with this catalogue of faults, and will turn to the many amiable and virtuous qualities which we are able to enumerate.

The modern Roman is pious and devout in the fullest acceptation of the words. He is a good son, and a kind parent. His religious feelings are sincere and earnest, and he is neither indifferent to, nor negligent of, the creed in which he has been educated. In the evenings, at sunset, when the church bells toll for twenty-four o'clock, numerous individuals, particularly of the peasant class, may be seen to take off their hats in the streets or public squares, and with eyes raised up to heaven, or downcast upon the earth, cross themselves, repeat one or two secret prayers, and immediately afterwards resume their occupation or their discourse.

An instance of these spontaneous vespers, which however happened further south, will give an idea of the wide-spread devotional feeling which exists in Italy. We were in the Bay of Naples, coasting along the Sorrentine shore, in a boat manned by five or six rowers. The evening was calm and soft, and the slight breeze grew fainter and fainter until it completely lulled at sunset. Immediately that the hour of twenty-four arrived, the tinkling of bells was heard from every church and convent that stood perched upon the coast. Our crew, who the moment before had been joking about eating long macaroni and so on, instantly raised their oars and began the evening prayer, the steersman commencing, and the others taking the responses. In two or three minutes this simple service was ended. The boat glided on again, witticisms once more flew about, and we pursued our course to Castellamare.

The Roman is charitable, and that not merely from disposition and temperament,

but from principle. He considers alms-giving as a religious exercise. When money is distributed without much attention to the just claims and real merits of the receiver, it will frequently be ill-bestowed, and a race of impostors and professed beggars will be produced and encouraged. Still, whatever may be the result, the Roman is charitable. And it is well that he is so; for, in Rome, the person who is overtaken by indigence or sickness must trust principally to that source for assistance. The prisoners who were confined in the Capitol during the papal sway seemed to be well aware of the tenderness of heart of their countrymen in this respect. Upon all occasions, and more especially on Sundays and holidays, they begged most vociferously through their iron-grated windows, and received whatever you might please to bestow in a little linen bag dangling by a string at the end of a long cane, which they managed as we handle a fishing-rod. It would have been easy for an accomplice thus to convey to them knives, files, and so on; but the police did not seem to apprehend such a possibility—at all events they took no measures to prevent it.

The popes also did their best to excite the liberality of individuals towards their poorer brethren. Before the adoption of the decimal coinage, on the half-pauls (a silver coin equivalent to about twopence halfpenny) there were various inscriptions intended to remind their possessor that they were to be given away, not spent. For example, "Date et dabitur," "Give and it shall be given;" "Egeno opes," "Help to the wretched;" "Pauperi porrige manum," "Stretch out your hand to the poor;" "Auxilium de sancto," "Help from the holy;" and many other sentences of similar import formed the reverse of the coin, and might sometimes serve to excite the flagging benevolence of those who could spare a trifle to relieve their fellow-creatures.

The Roman is frugal; he wastes nothing. When he kills even a chicken he saves the blood and makes it into puddings. Goldfinches, tomtits, and little fishes about half an inch long, are not neglected as useless, but are collected in sufficient quantities to furnish a meal. The taste for devouring these miserable fry is nothing new in that locality. "Augustus Cæsar," says Suetonius, "secundarium panem et minutos pisciculos maximè appetebat"—was particularly fond of household or brown bread and very tiny little fishes. The discovery of whitebait in the Thames has inoculated

the British with similar tastes. The Roman applies to a useful purpose that which the poorest Englishman would consider as offal, and would throw upon a dunghill with contempt and disgust.

It is seriously affirmed that cats occasionally form part of his diet. He certainly does allow dog-fish, otters, and the repulsive cuttle-fish to enter into his bill of fare. He eats with relish the lowest description of food. Roasted chestnuts, during their season, are his daily bread. In summer large coarse-looking gourds, baked till they are soft, and in winter the seeds which are washed from them, furnish a considerable article of consumption. Woodpeckers, magpies, jays, hawks, owls, and other birds of prey, tortoises, every fungus that can be gathered which is not poisonous, thistle-roots, dandelion, shoots of the hop-plant, and wild asparagus, do not want for purchasers in the Roman markets. Prejudice alone, and not reason, prevents us from following the Roman example in this respect.

Though very susceptible of cold in winter, his economical propensities rarely allow him to go to the expense of a fire. Sometimes, when it freezes, he does carry a little earthen pot of lighted charcoal under his mantle, but his usual plan is to load himself with great-coats, cloaks, and flannels, as a less expensive method of resisting the weather.

He is independent in his habits, particularly when belonging to the middle or lower classes of society, and wants but little assistance from others. He can cook his own dinner, fetch his own wine from the shop, arrange his own room, and mend his own clothes. He is always a much better manager and housekeeper than his wife, who generally seems conscious of her inferiority, and intrusts all domestic arrangements to her lord and master. It is quite common in Rome, on the morning of a holiday, to see a party of men assembled on some sunny bank in a retired situation, darning their stockings, patching their coats, and performing for themselves those sundry repairs which other men of their class would insist upon having done by their wives.

He is civil, good-natured, and obliging. He is accustomed to an intercourse with strangers, and thinking himself to a certain degree their superior, is amused, not annoyed, by their oddities. He was trained to gentlemanly habits, while we were yet but painted savages. He still bears marks of this historical fact, and still considers us

as in some degree barbarians. If you turn into a wine-shop or an eating-house in Rome among the lowest of the people, you will never be hustled, or robbed, or kicked out, as under similar circumstances might possibly be your fate in London. On the contrary, you will rather be assisted to get anything you may want, and will neither be received nor dismissed with anything but politeness. If in the market-place you stop to stare at the costume of a peasant, he will not be offended at your curiosity, or attack you with abuse, but will give you a smile, and perhaps a bow, and will cast a glance of inquiry at your costume in return. If you halt at a stall to examine some unknown article, and ask its name, the owner may laugh perhaps at your ignorance, but will always do his best to explain the title and properties of the object of your admiration.

IRIS.

THROUGH April tears, from Heaven's gate, she came
To greening Earth: and straight the violet-blooms
Shed fragrant incense 'neath her wingèd feet,
And hawthorns flushed, and amber cowslips shook
Their nodding bells, and periwinkles blue
Their stars unfolded. And the yellow globes
Of king-cups quivered, and the daisies white
Snowed all the meads, and reddening orchids blushed,
And all the Flower Kingdom hailed the Spring.

Then shone a golden sun-gleam through the storm
Upon the rainbow-goddess as she flew
From Heaven to Earth, gilding her flowing hair,
Her locks ambrosial, with a halo bright,
Tingeing her snow-white foot with roseate kiss,
Lighting with loveliness her pansy eyes,
And making emerald and amethyst
Her ever-changing dress. Rich rubies glowed
Amid her tresses; purple sapphires gleamed
Upon her milk-white breast, and opals pure
With rose-spark hidden in their fiery depth
Lent lustre to her brow.

Forth burst the choir
Of birds exultant with a pean sweet
Of welcomes to their Queen; the brown thrush sat
And trilled and quavered on the almond bough;
The velvet-coated blackbird tuned his flute
On snowy cherry-spray; the bullfinch piped
And whistled mid the pale pink apple-blooms,
And Flower, and Bird, and Man all hailed the Spring!

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

No. I.

THE RIFLE BRIGADE (THE OLD NINETY-FIFTH).

A PERIOD like the present, when the army has been almost totally reorganised, and many of its abuses swept away, seems peculiarly adapted for some brief historical and anecdotic sketches of celebrated English, Scotch, and Irish regiments. From the new platform we can look back and sum up the brave deeds and chivalrous exploits of our old soldiers, and gather from half-

forgotten autobiographies and memoirs, both of officers and privates, many interesting illustrations of old warfare in the countless fields where our ancestors gathered laurels, and bound victory to their standards. From all of them we draw this inference, that we may have better organisation, but truer and stauncher men it will be impossible to rear; let us hope that the young soldiers who read these chapters may learn from them to emulate (if they are unable to transcend) the glory of their sires; the sons of the "Die-hards" of Waterloo were the heroes of Inkermann and Lucknow.

In the old Peninsular days, when a recruiting sergeant of the gallant Ninety-fifth entered a country town in his grave green and black uniform, with the many-coloured ribbons fluttering from his shako, the country lads and lasses, gathering round the drum and fife, would listen with awe and delight as the plausible and not too modest hero shouted:

"All you young fellows of spirit here come and enlist in the Rifle Brigade. That's the place for you. Hurrah for the fighting Ninety-fifth, that is always the first in the field and the last out of it!"

Recruiting sergeants are not perhaps always to be taken quite at their own valuations; but those dark green men certainly did not claim too much, in this instance at least. From Copenhagen to Lucknow, the names blazoned on the banners of the Rifles tell of many a hot corner where the dark men have been the first to enter and the last to leave. At Vimiera and Corunna, at Busaco and Barossa, at Badajoz and Waterloo, the Rifle Brigade has gone to the front without brag and without delay; and under many a Pyrenean rock, and many a Spanish cork-tree, lie the bones of our brave riflemen. At Fuentes d'Onoro they were not slack; at Ciudad Rodrigo their rifles were heard; at Salamanca they were not the last among the Frenchmen; at Nivelle they were in the thick of it; at Alma and at Inkermann they held their own against the stubborn grey-coats. The last time we heard of these fighting men of ours they had exchanged a region of snow for a region of fire, and were at Lucknow driving bullets into many a Sepoy murderer, the sight of their dark green uniforms bringing joy and gladness to many an English heart.

Some of the Peninsular "affairs" in which the old Ninety-fifth distinguished themselves, and a few of the battles and sieges in which they snatched laurels from

the fire, it is our purpose to sketch, as much as possible from the mouths of eye-witnesses. A revival of these old adventures will warm the hearts of veterans, and make the eyes of the young soldiers of the present time sparkle. They will show the military student of the present day the changes that warfare has undergone, and convince him that the prowess of our sires is not easily to be surpassed.

After the glories and disasters of Sir John Moore's retreat, the men of the Ninety-fifth, says an old rifleman, in his *Random Shots*, were all that a soldier could love to look on—bronzed, hardy dare-devils, perfect workers in ambush, and excellent shots, whose perfect discipline consisted in doing everything that was necessary, and nothing that was not. Every man enjoyed his work, every man loved the regiment like his own father. It was such a favourite corps just then with the militiamen, that in three days' volunteering, after the return from Corunna, the Ninety-fifth, it is said, received a thousand men over their complement, which compelled the Horse Guards to give an additional battalion to the corps.

The affair at Calcabellos was a regimental fight, often talked of as a gallant thing round the mess-table and the bivouac fires of the Ninety-fifth at that time. It had happened in 1809, during the retreat of Sir John Moore.

Moore, followed by herds of muleteers, plunderers, drunken soldiers and stragglers, dying of cold, hunger, and wounds, had pushed up from Salamanca into the mountains of Galicia. At Calcabellos, a small town four miles from Villa Franca, we made a stand against an enemy always more fierce and daring for success. The Guia, a deep stream, crossed by an old stone bridge, ran through the place. The Villa Franca side—a hill, as Napier describes it, rough with vineyards and serrated with stone walls—was occupied by two thousand five hundred of our red-coats and a battery of six guns. Four hundred of the Ninety-fifth, and about the same number of cavalry, were posted on a hill two miles further back to hold the roads leading to Bemibre and Foncevadron, where the French were expected. A little after noon, on the 3rd of January, General Colbert approached us with six or eight squadrons, and seeing the clumps of red on the hill by Calcabellos, sent to Soult for reinforcements. Soult, not believing we were going to make a stand here, sent back somewhat

contemptuous orders to Colbert to charge without delay. Colbert, pained by this reproof, charged with fury; the dark mass of riflemen, which had covered the rear of our infantry, fell back when the French came in sight, and were just passing the bridge at Calcabellos, and with careless composure filing through the street, knowing that our cavalry were between them and the enemy, when our cavalry, apprehending an attack in force, came tearing over the bridge among them. A moment afterwards and the French cavalry, sabres up, were on the fag end of the Ninety-fifth, and thirty or forty men of the rear company were taken prisoners, and several cut down before they could use their rifles. Colbert had come to prove his knight-hood, and over the bridge he charged, determined to do or die. But the men of the Ninety-fifth were cool and firm; they quietly drew off the road, right and left, into the vineyards, and there, over the walls, peeped the deadly barrels. They let the cavalry staff dash up to within a few yards, and then opened a fire that swept many a saddle. Plunkett, a young athletic Irishman, and a deadly shot, kept well to the front, determined to single out Colbert, the leader on the white horse; "You too shall die, my boy," he cried, and down at the next shot rolled Colbert. The French voltigeurs at this swarmed over the river, and closed in thick and fast on our green-coats; but a galling fire held them in check, and they made little progress toward the fiery vineyards. Then, eager for their share, down hurried the Fifty-second from the ridge to close with the French, and pell-mell the skirmishers went, till night came on. Merle's division tried in vain to turn our left, being checked by our battery. Till ten at night the Ninety-fifth fought slowly backward among the vineyards, the enemy repeatedly pressing them to ascertain if our army were on the move, but never finding out what he wanted to know till daybreak.

In the battle of Sabugal, April the 3rd, 1811, the men in green were, as usual, among the foremost. Massena, driven from Portugal, was reluctantly falling back into Spain. On the banks of the Coa he resolved to make a stand, and chose Sabugal, at a bend of the stream, for a fighting-place. The town was on a slope, surrounded by woodlands.

It was a foggy morning when Colonel Beckwith, commander of the First Brigade, led off four companies of the Ninety-fifth, followed by the Forty-third Regiment,

across a ford of the Coa where the water was waist high. In the fog Erskine's Dragoons lost their way, and fifteen hundred of our men were thus left to oppose half the French army, strongly posted. Regnier's whole corps was in front, half hidden in fog; twelve thousand infantry, supported by cavalry and artillery. Up the wooded hill went the Rifles, bugles sounding as they dispersed in skirmishing order. Beckwith's tall, commanding figure and noble face towered above them all. He was a man, Napier says, with generous warmth, able to rally an army in flight. The four companies drove back the French light troops, but a wall of men rose over the summit of the hill, against whom the Rifles could make no head; the Rifles then opened out to allow the Forty-third to advance; a tearing volley and a charge of steel soon sent the French rolling into the valley below, and again the dark green men spread out in front, two and two, "sticking to the French like leeches." Beckwith was the life and soul of the to-and-fro fight round the summit; his calm, clear voice was distinctly heard over the roar of battle, and gave new heart to his men. Twice that hero led successful charges against overwhelming masses with but two companies of the Forty-third. Once his two companies were opposed to a fresh column in front, while others were advancing on his flank. It was time to retreat; and Beckwith called out:

"Now, my lads, we'll just go back a little, if you please."

On hearing this the riflemen began to run, but he shouted again:

"No, no; I don't mean that. We're in no hurry; we'll just walk quietly back, and you can give them a shot as you go along."

The men, instantly halting, opened a stinging fire, and he rode on quietly among them, the blood streaming down his face, where a musket ball had shaved it. Presently he called out: "Now, my men, that will do. Let us show them our teeth again. Halt—front—advance! Now you rascals," he called out, shaking his fist at the foe, "come on if you dare." But the French could not screw themselves up the hill, and by this time two battalions of the Fifty-second had come to the front, and were hammering at their right, while the Rifles were pelting their front and left. One more dash with the Forty-third, and our other divisions closing in, Regnier and his red-trousers fled. In his despatch home,

Wellington said that "this was one of the most glorious actions that British troops were ever engaged in." During the fight, says Captain Kincaird, a spaniel belonging to one of the Rifle officers ran about barking at the balls, and was once seen sniffing at a live shell, which exploded in his face without hurting him.

The siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, January, 1812, again saw the Ninety-fifth ready for their work. The dark green men were told off to dig holes near the walls, and pick off the gunners at the embrasures. On the 18th, at night, when the necessity of "storming" was announced, a hundred and twenty of the Rifles volunteered among the foremost. They were led by Captains Mitchell and Johnstone, and Lieutenant Kincaird, the whole storming party being under the command of Major Napier, of the Fifty-second. At dark, when the words went round to "Fall in and form," the forlorn hope drew up behind a convent, and General Crawford addressed them:

"Soldiers, the eyes of your country are upon you. Be steady—be cool—be firm in the assault. The town must be yours this night."

A solemn silence fell on the men, says Costello, an eye-witness. The general shouted, "Now, lads, for the breach," and they started at the double. As they turned round the convent wall, the space between the stormers and the breach grew one blaze of blinding light with the French fire-balls, and the glare led them on to glory. Nearer the walls canister, grape, round shot, and shell poured round them, mixed with a hailstorm of bullets. General Crawford fell almost immediately, mortally wounded. Dashing on at the wall, the forlorn hope, without waiting for the cowardly Portuguese with their bags of hay and straw, leaped headlong sixteen feet into the ditch, and one or two ladders being brought and placed against the scarp, mounted up to the breach. Time after time the first comers were swept down dead and wounded, till at last a lodgment was made. The third division gave a cheer at the second breach, and this stirring the riflemen and their fellows to madness, in they went, over the splintered and broken wall, among the bayonets, swords, and fire-vomiting guns. Suddenly, Napier staggered and would have fallen back into the trench had not a rifleman caught him. His left arm was shattered.

"Never mind me," he cried; "push on, my lads; the town is ours."

A few moments after, the French sprang a mine, that destroyed Captain Uniacke, of the Ninety-fifth, and many of the stormers. The French, as they retreated along the ramparts, kept up a fire. One of the Ninety-fifth, falling over a howitzer, stumbled against a cannoneer who was stooping across a wounded officer. The gunner had bent our man almost double, when some of the Ninety-fifth ran up and bayoneted the Frenchman. Napier and others were, it was supposed, killed by shot from the frightened Portuguese on the glacis. The breach was a dreadful sight, says one who was there. The bodies lay stripped, half buried under the blackened stones, and limbs, torn off by the explosion, were strewn about. Groping among the mangled bodies of the Connaught Rangers, were poor Irishwomen trying to decipher the disfigured faces of their husbands. By the Ninety-fifth, Uniacke was much lamented, for he was affable to the men, and his chivalrous courage was notorious. As the soldiers used to say, "He does not call out, 'go on,' but 'come on.'"

Speaking of the conduct of the men of the Ninety-fifth during this siege and elsewhere, Captain Kincaid says in his *Random Shots* :

"I have often heard it disputed whether the most daring deeds are done by men of good or bad repute, but I never felt inclined to give either a preference over the other, for I have seen the most desperate things done by both. I remember one day, during the siege, that a shell pitched in the trenches within a few yards of a noted bad character of the Fifty-second regiment, who, rather than take the trouble of keeping out of the trench until it had exploded, went very deliberately up, took it in his arms, and pitched it outside, obliging those to jump back who had there taken shelter from it. . . . A wild young officer, who died at Waterloo," says the same writer, "was at variance with his father on the subject of pecuniary matters, and in mounting the breach at Ciudad, sword in hand, while both sides were falling thick and fast, he remarked to a brother officer alongside of him, in his usual jocular way, 'Egad, if I had my old father here now, I think I should be able to bring him to terms.'"

On one occasion, when the Ninety-fifth was covering a retreat, a superior body of the French burst upon the post of Lieutenant Uniacke, compelling him to rightabout rather sharp to save his men in green, and

he himself narrowly escaped the clutch of a short stout French officer in a cocked hat, and a huge pair of jack-boots. Uniacke was one of the most active men in the regiment, and when the supports came up and turned the tables, he resolved to give his fat friend a run in return, expecting to have his knuckles in his neck before he had got a few yards, but the fat Frenchman plied his legs as if he wore seven-leagued boots, and was soon out of Uniacke's reach.

At another time, when Colonel Beckwith was holding the pass of Barba del Puerco with four companies of the Ninety-fifth, the Rifles won another feather for their cap. The French General Ferey, a bold and enterprising soldier, made a night attack on the post with six hundred chosen grenadiers. One sentry on the bridge was snapped before he could fire, and another was bayoneted. A sergeant's party higher up the rocks had just time to shoot, and alarm the company on picket under O'Hara. The men had hardly snatched their rifles before the enemy were among them pell-mell. They, however, fought bravely, hand to hand, back to the top of the pass, when Sidney Beckwith's companies, starting from sleep, rushed forward to their support, and with a thundering discharge, hurled back the too-confident assailants into the ravine below, and back over the bridge. During the fight Beckwith observed a French grenadier close to him taking deliberate aim at his head. Stooping suddenly down and picking up a stone he shouted, "You scoundrel, get out of that." This disconcerted the man's aim, and Beckwith escaped with only his cap blown to pieces.

In one smart action (for the glory of a regiment like this consists as much in individual deeds as in collective courage), the Ninety-fifth, having driven in the French tirailleurs, were suddenly stopped by a terrific fire from regiments in line, and had to take shelter behind trees and under hillocks. Ten minutes the bullets had hailed fast, when suddenly a young scampish rifleman named Priestly, whose hot blood chafed at this concession, started out from behind his tree, and shouted :

"Well, I'll be hanged if I'll be bothered any longer, so here's at you," and fired his rifle coolly at the French, reloading very deliberately. His comrades, leaping up, followed his example, and the French, panic-struck at such audacity, took to their heels without firing another shot. In the same action a rifleman was in the act of taking aim at a Frenchman when a hare crossed

between them; the muzzle of the rifle mechanically followed the hare in preference, and as the animal was doubling into our lines a Rifle officer struck up the piece with his sword, as the man would have shot one of our people, so blindly intent was he upon the game before him.

At Casal Nova, some of the Ninety-fifth displayed the coolness of Roman heroes. A section of a company had been thrown forward among the skirmishers, and two of the men were sent to a small eminence to watch the enemy. They got behind two pieces of rock, against which, in a few minutes, flattened hundreds of bullets. The moment he was under cover, a sturdy old rifleman, one Rouse, lugged out his rifle to give them a return shot, but the sight of even his nose brought a dozen inquiring bullets to the spot, on seeing which Rouse said to his companion, "We must just wait till the shower is over."

Badajoz was the next place where the Ninety-fifth earned a plenteous harvest of glory. The Rifles were often in the trenches, and distinguished themselves by their dare-devil hardihood, and there were, as might be guessed, plenty of the Ninety-fifth among the stormers. Four companies of the Rifles, under Colonel Cameron, were sent to line the crest of the glacis, and fire at the ramparts and the top of the left breach. The stormers, having had a double allowance of grog, for which most English soldiers would storm the hottest place known, fell in at about eight p.m., April the 6th, 1812. The right files of the leading sections were chosen to carry the ladders. Each ladder was carried by six men, each of whom also carried a sackful of hay to pad the trench. Lieutenant Johnson, of the Ninety-fifth, headed the forlorn hope with a party carrying ropes prepared with nooses, to throw over and drag down the beams stuck with sword-blades, that stopped the breach; but this brave man and his whole party were struck down before they got half-way. A shot came from Fort St. Roche, and another from the town; through the glare of the fireballs, and a whirlwind of grape-shot, canister, and small arms the stormers reached the glacis, thirty yards only from the walls, and put the ladders down the ditch. Edward Costello, a non-commissioned officer of the Ninety-fifth, in his interesting *Adventures of a Soldier*, has described the scene of horror in which he himself was foremost.

"Three of the men," he says, "who carried the ladder with me, were shot dead

in a breath, and its weight falling upon me, I fell back with the grass bag on my back. The rest of the stormers rushed up, regardless of my cries, or those of the wounded men around me, for by this time our men were falling fast. Many in passing were shot and fell upon me, so that I was actually drenched in blood. The weight I had to sustain became intolerable, and had it not been for the grass-bag, which in some measure protected me, I must have been suffocated. At length, by a strong effort, I managed to extricate myself, in doing which I left my rifle behind me, and drawing my sword, rushed towards the breach. There I found four men putting a ladder down the ditch; and not daring to pause, fresh lights being still thrown out of the town, with a continual discharge of musketry, I slid quickly down the ladder; but before I could recover my footing, was knocked down again by the bodies of men who were shot in attempting the descent. I, however, succeeded in extricating myself from underneath the dead, and rushing forward to the right, to my surprise and fear I found myself immersed to my neck in water. Until then I was tolerably composed, but now all reflection left me, and diving through the water, being a good swimmer, gained the other side, but lost my sword. I now attempted to make to the breach, which the blaze of musketry from the walls clearly showed me. Without rifle, sword, or any other weapon, I succeeded in clambering up a part of the breach, and came near to a chevaux-de-frise, consisting of a piece of heavy timber studded with sword-blades, turning on an axis; but just before reaching it I received a stroke on the breast, whether from a grenade, or a stone, or by the butt-end of a musket, I cannot say, but down I rolled senseless, and drenched with water and human gore. I could not have laid long in this plight, for when my senses had in some measure returned, I perceived our gallant fellows still rushing forward, each seeming to share a fate more deadly than my own. The fire continued in one horrible and incessant peal, as if the mouth of the infernal regions had opened to vomit forth destruction upon all around us, and this was rendered still more appalling by the fearful shouts of the combatants and cries of the wounded that mingled in the uproar."

In the midst of the uproar and disgraceful rapine in the captured town, Costello relates seeing the duke surrounded by a number of

drunken soldiers, who, holding up spirit bottles with the heads knocked off, were shouting :

"Old boy, will you drink? The town's our own. Hurrah!"

In this desperate assault the Ninety-fifth alone lost twenty-two officers killed and wounded, ten of whom died.

At the storming of San Sebastian the Rifle volunteers were wild to be chosen. A man named Burke, who had been on the forlorn hope at Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, and was a man of desperate courage, was rejected because of his excesses. The man, however, besieged the adjutant's tent night and day for several days, and the officer at last yielded. Of the twenty-five chosen from the battalion, this Burke was one of the very few who escaped. The senior lieutenant, Percival, claimed the post of honour, and a young lieutenant also joined who had been in two forlorn hopes before. This brave man had a presentiment he would be killed, yet he actually exchanged from the trenches on purpose to join the storm. He was only half killed; a ball entering under his eye, passed down the roof of his mouth, through his palate, entered again at his collar-bone, and was cut out at the shoulder blade. He recovered. In one case twenty pounds were offered to and refused by a rifleman, who had drawn lots for a storming party.

At Waterloo, that end of all things, be sure the Rifles held their own. A rifleman is said to have fired the first shot in this battle at a French cuirassier vedette, whom he killed. The Ninety-fifth were stationed on the Namur road, about four hundred yards in the rear of La Haye Sainte, the left extending behind a broken hedge, which ran along the ridge. Three companies occupied a small knoll in front. "I had never heard," says a Rifle officer who was present, "of a battle in which everybody was killed, but this seemed likely to be an exception, as all were going by turns. Our division, which had stood up five hundred men at the commencement of the battle, had gradually dwindled down to a solitary line of skirmishers. The Twenty-seventh Regiment were lying literally dead in squares, a few yards behind us."

"At the commencement of the battle of Waterloo three companies of our regiment," says Captain Kincaird, "held a sand-bank in front of the position, and abreast of La Haye Sainte, which we clung to most tenaciously, and it was not until we were stormed in front, and turned in both flanks,

that we finally left it. Previous to doing so, however, a French officer rushed out of their ranks, and made a dash at one of ours, but neglecting the precaution of calculating the chances of success before striking the first blow, it cost him his life. The officer he stormed happened to be a gigantic Highlander, about six feet and a half, and, like most big men, slow to wrath, but a fury when roused. The Frenchman held that in his hand which was well calculated to bring all sizes upon a level—a good small-sword—but as he had forgotten to put on his spectacles, his first, and last, thrust passed by the body, and lodged in the Highlander's left arm. Saunders' blood was now up (as well as down), and with our then small regulation half-moon sabre, better calculated to shave a lady's-maid than a Frenchman's head, he made it descend upon the pericranium of his unfortunate adversary with a force which snapped it at the hilt. His next dash was with his fist (and the hilt in it) smack in his adversary's face, which sent him to the earth; and, though I grieve to record it, yet, as the truth must be told, I fear me that the chivalrous Frenchman died an ignominious death, namely, by a kick. But where one's own life is at stake, we must not be too particular."

How the gallant Ninety-fifth got through this ordeal of fire is naively described by an officer of the corps, who thus describes the regiment on its return to England after Waterloo :

"There was Beckwith," says the writer, "with a cork leg; Pemberton and Manners with a shot each in the knee, making them as stiff as the other's tree one; Loftus Gray with a gash in the lip, and minus a portion of one heel, which made him march to the tune of dot-and-go-one; Smith with a shot in the ankle; Eeles minus a thumb; Johnston, in addition to other shot-holes, a stiff elbow, which deprived him of the power of disturbing his friends as a scratcher of Scotch reels upon the violin; Percival with a shot through his lungs; Hope with a grape-shot lacerated leg; and George Simmons with his riddled body held together by a pair of stays, for his was no holiday waist, which naturally required such an appendage lest the burst of a sigh should snap it asunder, but one that appertained to a figure framed in nature's fittest mould to 'brave the battle and the breeze!'"

On the 25th of August, the festive anniversary of the day on which the Ninety-

fifth was originally raised, and called by "The Sweeps" the regiment's birthday, toasts equally glorious as those of Salamanca and Waterloo are now drunk. The soldiers of Alma and Inkermann and Lucknow may well congratulate themselves as being worthy successors of the dashing Peninsular fighting men, and the latest names inscribed on their roll of fame are as honourable to the wearers of the dark green and black facings as any on the glorious list.

LIVING ON A FLAT.

By "Living on a Flat," I do not mean subsisting upon the hospitality of a weak-minded person. For the Flat upon which I live I have to pay; and the price, too, of a moderately-sized House. My Flat is a suite of rooms, in fact, with all the appointments of a House, upon a single floor—arranged on the continental system, which, by slow but sure degrees, is saving this tight little town from getting too tight for the population.

I am not aware how far the system has extended in provincial cities; but here in London it is flourishing; and the wonder is that the popularity of the arrangement has not caused accommodation of the kind to increase at a more rapid rate. The foreign plant, to be sure, took a long time to get naturalised. The first speculator in the divided mansions of—let me call it Imperial-street—ruined himself, and did not therefore encourage others. For years it seemed the most improbable thing in the world that the bold beginning would ever come to an end; and even now the street has an absence of middle, as far as houses are concerned, and the process of making both ends meet has been accomplished only in a pecuniary sense. Very dreary they looked, those huge carcasses which the builder had no funds to finish; and when funds were found and the tenements were announced as to let, the public tendency for some time was to let them alone. They seemed built upon a Bridge of Sighs, having—as they still have—"a palace and a prison on each hand;" as the noble poet puts it, with a noble disdain of grammatical accuracy; and I can fancy that the first tenant must have felt about as cheerful as if he had taken up his abode in a lighthouse. But people came by degrees. The houses began to assume an air of society; speculators found

it worth while to give them increased company; and now the street—apart from the unhappy middle—looks not only noble, but lively; it is a popular thoroughfare, enjoying—I suppose thoroughfares enjoy such things—a grand hotel, a couple of more modest restaurants discreetly hidden in areas, and at one end a few handsome shops. On every side the associations are those of grandeur, wealth, and prosperity. Imperial-street, indeed, has founded a quarter of its own. Splendid structures, to which the name of Mansions is no mere flattery, have arisen in its vicinity; and subsidiary Places of less pretension are in immediate connexion. Grand historic monuments give it respect; the palace communicates dignity; and as for the prison, it is so hidden from sight as to have only a confidential kind of existence, with the secret confined to a few back windows. In the new as well as the old erections of the quarter the same system of subdivision is the unvarying rule. There are a few Flats in other parts of town; but this is the Quarter of Flats par excellence.

Such is Imperial-street and its surroundings in the present day; and in Imperial-street itself I take the liberty of living. I have made the discovery, which so many are making, that a Flat is a Paradise compared with a House—that is to say, where families are small and incomes not absurdly large. I could get a House imposing in appearance and commodious in size for the rent that I pay for my Flat; but the House would not be in a leading town thoroughfare. I should have to go for it to a more or less remote suburb; and I should be, as I have been, a slave to the Metropolitan Railway, a constant victim to cabs, and possibly a corpus vile upon which omnibuses make experiments upon human patience. Moreover, when I lived in a suburb I never walked. I always walk now, when the weather is not positively prohibitive, and thus I am a gainer in health and strength, as well as in pounds, shillings, and pence. I early made the discovery, too, that a House is not an Englishman's castle. It is an Englishman's prison, where he has nobody to regulate him, to feed and clothe him, and to pet him generally; where he must be his own governor, his own jailer, and pay all the expenses of his keep and incarceration. Take, by way of contrast, the conditions of a Flat. Mine has what may be considered the disadvantage of being up a considerable number

of stairs ; but it is not higher than people live in Paris, and really the stairs are nothing when you are used to them. They go for nothing, indeed, unless you indulge in the unphilosophical theory that you have arrived home merely because you have gained the street door. Those who have no expectations of the sort will not be disappointed ; and for my part, like most persons who have had the same experience, I take to the stairs very kindly. Arrived on your own landing there is your own door—a substantial door, with a knocker to it, beyond which none may pass without permission or a key. It opens, not immediately upon your apartments, but upon a hall, so that you have nothing to fear from sudden intrusions. Your tradesmen come here ; even the postman brings up your letters, giving his double knock as he would from the street. So once in your own domain you have no trouble with any stairs at all ; and the door below is open all day and up to a certain time at night—the arrangements on the latter head, however, being different in different houses. In candour, I must admit that the rose-leaf of the Sybarite life in a Flat is a little ruffled when the coals come in. Your coal-cellar is an erection on the landing ; and the carmen are prejudiced enough to consider that bringing up the costly commodity sack by sack is more troublesome than pitching the contents through a little hole in the pavement outside. But when warned of the responsibility, they employ small sacks, and any lingering traces of discontent may be easily accommodated by a little extra baksheesh for beer. It is pleasant to know, moreover, that the men must, after all, bring up the coals, whether they like it or not ; and considering that they have not to pay for them, they may be considered to have the best of the bargain.

The interior of my domain contains the usual departments of a domestic household—drawing-room, dining-room, &c., and, I need scarcely add, a kitchen. These are spacious, solid, and handsome apartments, such as would be found only in a large town house, and are in every way superior to the fragile compartments of suburban villas. The walls may have ears, but nobody can hear through them ; and in any one of the rooms you may be as much to yourself as you would be were all the rest of them up-stairs. The absence of stairs inside is, of course, a convenience as regards house-work ; and with the

general staircase, which is of stone, and kept beautifully whitened, I have nothing to do. In a Flat, indeed, you can get on merrily with one servant less than you would require in a House. Moreover, you have a faithful ally in the porter downstairs, whom a bell in the hall places at any time within hail, and as he is sure to have a wife, you will probably have the advantage of that lady's services also. My porter, by the way, is a retired domestic, and is ready to wait at table whenever wanted—rendering me independent of the local greengrocer. Thus you see that I enjoy not only every accommodation found in a house, but all the independence of chambers, and without the drawback inseparable from chambers, say in the Temple, of being cut off from communication with the outer world, except when your laundress comes to look after you.

When you go out of town, you need not leave any servant in charge of your dwelling. All you have to do is to lock it up. The porter is in charge, and the landlord is ultimately responsible should any robbery occur, though such an incident is impossible unless your interests be grossly neglected. And, à propos of servants, I may here refer to your independence of them when refractory. In a suburban villa you are much at their mercy, and will endure a great deal rather than be temporarily deserted. Here, in a Flat, you have the porter and his wife continually at hand ; and they can always provide at least temporary assistance in addition. The Flat, I need scarcely add, is a caution to policemen and gentlemen of the Life Guards, who find it difficult to cultivate your cook without the friendly medium of your area. Either our red or blue defender would find it no easy matter to pay a visit to your kitchen without a degree of publicity, compared with which a proclamation from the house tops would be a confidential communication. To chance robberies we are equally exposed with anybody whose servant leaves the door open while taking in a message from a stranger, and leaves him free of the coats and hats ; but the imperium in imperio arrangement makes a regular burglary a matter of evident difficulty—never, indeed, have I heard of such an occurrence in Imperial-street. This is one reason, I suppose, why ladies, who have “no loyal knights and true” to take care of them, seem fond of making their homes in the Flats.

There is one great blessing which ought to be remembered when we compare the rent of a House with that of a Flat. Here we have no callers for rates—no callers for taxes. The landlord pays them all—except, by the way, the income tax, the ministers of which ruthless and grinding exaction are sure to find you out sooner or later. For the rest, water, of which you have an abundant supply, is free as the air has been since the abolition of the window duty; and for gas, you pay only in so far as you may please to burn it in your own apartments. You may dazzle yourself with the brilliant light of the staircase on gratuitous terms; and you have not even to illumine your own landing—lit as it is by a burner outside your fanlight, through which it casts a subdued radiance into your hall. But while appreciating these advantages, I should be acting unfairly not to notice the fact—of which, I trust, the landlords will take heed—that rents are yet higher than they ought to be; that they have increased, are increasing, and ought to be diminished. It is a great thing to know what you have to pay; but the consolation is mitigated when you know that you have to pay a good round sum—so called, I suppose, because it is usually so difficult to square. And some of the rents are enormous; small Flats are to be had at from seventy to eighty and a hundred or more pounds a year; but others go up to three hundred, or thereabouts, in Imperial-street, and to still more in some of the Mansions, where space is precious indeed, and a hundred a year will be charged for a single room—rather stiff prices when it is remembered that they apply to unfurnished apartments. In the Mansions, I may mention, furnished suites are generally to be had also; much upon the *maisons meublées* system prevalent in Paris; and furnished or unfurnished, they are sometimes in connexion with a restaurant on the premises, which supplies your food and also a certain amount of service. This plan is all very well for people who are prepared to pay heavily for taking their ease; but it has its drawbacks, as you are compromised to the cookery and the service whether you like them or not, and cannot move off, bag and baggage, as you can from an hotel. However the mode of living may be acceptable to bachelor princes, it is obviously far inferior for domestic purposes to that afforded by the Flat in its integrity, such as we have in Imperial-street. The essence

of the latter system is the thorough independence which it allows. You have none of the restraints which attach to a Flat in Paris, where you are a slave to your *conciërge*, who watches you by day as you go in and out, and execrates you at night when you pull the cord after he has gone to sleep. Here, the porter lives in the lower regions, and after the outer door is shut you open it independently with your key, nobody knowing and nobody caring when you go to and fro. You are not bound to pay the porter unless for special services: in case you require these you may make him a modest monthly allowance, or keep him content with an occasional "tip." You are as free from interference on his part as you are from that of the Emperor of China.

But I have wandered from my point. The rents, as I have said, are too high; but, high as they are, every vacant Flat finds a ready tenant, both in Imperial-street and its dependencies—the Places and Terraces to which I have referred—the more western Mansions being on a grand scale of their own. Yet the increasing demand for the most moderately priced Flats has not for some time past led to an increased supply. The consequence is the upward tendency of rents, which each succeeding tenant finds, in many cases, less moderate than the last. The evil would be remedied by a larger provision for growing requirements; and it seems strange, under the circumstances, that Imperial-street should still present so great a gap, in its centre, of unoccupied ground. Not only families and private persons generally are flocking to the street, but professional men find in it the most eligible quarters. Architects, surveyors, civil engineers, are giving it a decided preference over the neighbouring Great Guelph-street, which was once so potential as an "address." In the many chambers which make up the varieties of Imperial-street, parliamentary agents and solicitors also delight to locate, and here parliamentary barristers are also to be found, in convenient proximity to those who employ them, and to the scene of their luxurious labours. Considering these facts, it seems strange indeed that Imperial-street is not yet finished. Builders would surely repay themselves for its completion, as others have done before them; or why does not a company take the business in hand? I disavowed, at the outset, the invidious idea of "Living on a Flat;" but if tenants are

made to pay much more than they do, the landlords, in a general sense, will scarcely escape the imputation.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXVI. RUMOURS OF A WILL.

LADY DUKE and her co-conspirator met that night, Doctor Spooner having come down to see her. "Birkenshaw," he said, "has just gone away, taking with him the heads of the instructions. The deed will be ready for execution to-morrow."

"What is to be done?" asked the lady.

"I think that he believes he will not live," said the other.

"And are those Nagles to get it all? Surely you are not going to accept that state of things."

"It will be executed, and I suppose they will apply for probate," he paused. "Nothing can be done till then," he added, slowly.

"Nothing can be done till then," she repeated. "What can you mean?"

"I mean," he said, "that we can do nothing now, Lady Duke. Things must take their course. It would not be proper to oppose him in this notion, it would only increase his state of nervous excitement."

"And he is excited?" she asked.

"If you had been there to-day," he answered, "and unfortunately you were not, you would have thought his manner strange, very strange indeed. He burst out of his room, and, what with his wild eyes and incoherent manner, I could not tell what would be the next step. I did my best to keep those people from him, as I knew what the effect would be. I warned them again and again."

Lady Duke remained silent for a few moments. Then she said:

"From beginning to end this Nagle business is a perfect infatuation. Any court would say so. No man in his right mind could be so weak. But of course the Nagle party, and those Gardiners, don't think him so. It would not be their interest to do so. What about this solicitor he has sent for?"

"He is said to be an upright man, respected in his profession, of good birth, but he married in a low life. The genteel people here have made a dead set against him in consequence. I believe it is for that very reason that Mr. Doughty sent for him. The ladies of this place 'turn up their noses,' as it is called, at her."

Lady Duke reflected a little on this piece of information. She was not displeased to find herself being gradually drawn into a situation so favourable to all her gifts of intrigue, which indeed for many years now had lain fallow. One or two of the watering-places had long ago been the scene of her exertions, when she had plotted against rival patronesses of society, and had acquired a certain fashionable unscrupulousness. Now her social moral sense had become blunted, the old keenness was awakened, and she eagerly seized the materials now presented to her, as something that would give practice to these old disused faculties.

"We should see this gentleman," she said, "and some notice should be taken of him."

CHAPTER XXXVII. CORINNA'S FLIGHT.

THE news that Birkenshaw had been sent for by Mr. Doughty, of course with the object of making "a settlement of his worldly affairs"—elegant and tender circumlocution for "making his will"—spread with rapidity through Brickford. In the wake of this piece of news followed another, of even more interest, for it was openly stated that all that handsome fortune was bequeathed to Corinna Nagle. There was, of course, no official announcement to this effect, such news, however interesting, not being usually given out before the proper time; but an infallible instinct, which in the present case might be relied on, told every one that such was the disposition. Lucky girl; enviable, scheming, cunning creature, that "played her cards so knowingly all the time!" Well, if any one there had a daughter of that kind, and that would stoop to carrying out such a game, they would not be compensated by any money in the world, thank Heaven! Some were inhuman enough on the whole to rather prefer that she should be in her grave than see her enriched by such arts. However, "there it was." The will was made, Corinna was of course the heiress, and the next thing was to see how the girl bore her fortune.

Lady Duke was the foremost in this inquisitive purpose, and on the news went straight to the Nagle mansion. She had plenty of courage, and was not in the least afraid to confront these enemies. At the door she saw a fly waiting, a trunk was brought out past her as she ascended the steps; while across the hall stamped and strode an infuriated man, flourishing his long arms, and talking loudly. In his blind

excitement, he hailed the arrival of Lady Duke as that of an ally.

"Just come in here, ma'am," he said, "and say what you think of this piece of idiotcy. Look at that girl—where has she gone to now? She's mad, or losing her wits. She ought to be in the hands of keepers, so she ought. I can do nothing with her."

"What is this about?" asked the lady, coldly.

"It's about, and about, and about," he answered incoherently, and himself really seeming to require the restraint he spoke of. "Why here she's going away. Going up to London—abroad—God knows where, and at such a moment."

Lady Duke understood him perfectly, but affected astonishment. The next moment Corinna had entered in her travelling dress, and regarded the visitor haughtily.

"Say something to her," continued Mr. Nagle, quite beside himself with agitation. "There never was such folly. When all is settled now, and she may live like a princess for the rest of her life."

"For Heaven's sake!" said Corinna, imploringly, "do not add to our mortification at such a moment by talking in that way. As I am going away, and nothing can change my purpose, let me do so with my proper pride."

"Oh, you mean," said Lady Duke, maliciously, "this story about Mr. Doughty's will. Every one is talking about it, and will be coming to congratulate presently. It is certainly a most flattering compliment, and a wonderful piece of good fortune."

"Exactly what I say, my lady," said Mr. Nagle. "There's sense! There's rationality! All this fiddle-de-dee romance and sensitiveness is ridiculous. Why it's throwing away—it's—it's"—added he, at a loss for a word—"it's like Bedlam. Don't you think so?"

"Oh, my opinion is not worth much, at least with Miss Nagle, who I am afraid does not judge me very favourably. But I may say this, that when now the prize has been secured, it is scarcely worth while to draw back. For a hundred thousand pounds one might put up with some unpleasant remarks."

"Exactly what I say," said Mr. Nagle.

Corinna was looking at the visitor with a searching glance that made the lady uncomfortable.

"I understand—I perfectly understand," she said. "Yours has always indeed been

disinterested advice. My father, though he is so grateful for your support of his views, does not perhaps see what you are really aiming at. On this occasion you shall succeed, and the dear wishes of your heart be carried out."

"You are unjust to me, Miss Nagle," said Lady Duke, somewhat confused; "but I should not have interfered in the matter."

"If I were the designing person that you and the people here would make me out, I should remain. My conduct speaks for itself. It, at all events, looks disinterested. Now, father, I must go."

It was time for Lady Duke to withdraw. Indeed, Mr. Nagle was a picture of rage and despair; and it was perhaps best that only members of his family should witness his wild ebullitions. At the corner of the street she waited, saw Corinna get into the fly, and drive away to the railway.

"Thank goodness, thank goodness!" said her ladyship with more devotion than she uttered aspirations in a church. "We have got rid of her. Now the ground is getting clear."

CHAPTER XXXVIII. NEW ALLIES.

A QUARTER of an hour later arrived Mrs. Gardiner, who found the bereaved Nagle almost tearing his hair with vexation. The lady was smiling and full of the good news she brought.

"I have come to carry off Miss Corinna. Poor dear Doughty insists on seeing her. She will do him more good than all the doctors."

"My good woman, what are you talking about? The girl is gone—left me, her old father! It's ridiculous—monstrous—childish—scandalous!"

"Gone!" said Mrs. Gardiner, genuinely astonished.

"Yes, gone altogether—for ever, ma'am."

"And at such a time! Then it's all over with your hopes. Those Dukes will have it all their own way now. What infatuation!"

Mrs. Gardiner did not care to remain listening to the dismal laments of the baffled musician, but repaired at once to Mr. Doughty. On the road, however, the news did not appear so disastrous, and by the time she reached his door, she made the same reflection, almost in the same words, as Lady Duke had used, that, "thank goodness, the ground was being cleared." The removal of the dangerous Corinna was indeed a relief for them all—and, alas! for the loyalty of the late alliance, she was delighted to throw over "those Nagles"

for good and all. She had prepared her part already. The invalid watched her face with a wistful expectancy.

"Well, the news?" he said. "She is coming to me? No!"

His face fell; but the unscrupulous lady was determined to perform the operation with the mercilessness of a surgeon.

"She has behaved cruelly, infamously. She can have no feeling."

"Who? Corinna?"

"Yes; she has gone. Left you, and the place for ever."

He sank back in his chair with a stupefied look.

"She was told what you had done for her so nobly; but all had no effect. I give her up after this. She is not worth thinking of."

"So ends the infatuation," he said. "Poor old fool that I have shown myself."

"Old!" murmured Mrs. Gardiner. "What nonsense!"

"Yes, old and imbecile. It serves me right; although I could see that she considered my liking and admiration an affront. What right had an elderly commonplace being to think of her, the divine Corinna, who keeps her affections for the young and the handsome."

"What right! You were above her in every way. No, believe me, this is not the mere pride of poverty, but there is something radically wrong in the girl. She thinks she can best secure all she wants from your partiality in this way, without sacrifice of her particular inclinations."

This artful speech had its effect.

"What inclinations?" he said, half rising, and then falling back from exhaustion; "no, she could not be so artful, so cruelly artful. It would be devilish. She might have waited for decency's sake until the grave had closed over me. It would not be for long."

"Yes, and then she could follow her own affections, and enjoy love and money together."

"Never!" he said, snatching at some papers that were on the table. "See, here is the deed I was childish enough to have drawn out. It is only the draft. She has not got it on parchment as yet, nor

have I attached my poor trembling signature. There," he continued, tearing it across deliberately, "that fit is over. It was a short, though a violent one; but it is over at last."

Mrs. Gardiner saw this act of destruction with some consternation, for it involved some sacrifice of her private interests. She felt that though "the ground was cleared" it was done in almost too wholesale a manner. The greater tree was cut down and cleared away, but her little shrub might have been left standing. Mr. Doughty noticed her rueful expression.

"Don't be afraid," he said, bitterly; "you and your party shall not suffer."

"Oh, I was not thinking of that," she said, with some economy of truth.

"Oh, but you were!" he said, sarcastically. "No matter, perhaps it will not make so much difference after all, as I mean to get well now. I must vindicate myself, and prove myself no longer the idiotic being the public has supposed me to be. No longer a cat's-paw, a weak confiding creature, that will put up with any treatment. Henceforth, those who are friendly to me I shall treat as friends."

He was growing very agitated, his eyes were very wild indeed.

"You hinted something," he went on, "as to the motive of this lady's flight. You said she had gone in the direction her inclinations led her. Can it be supposed that this is the old attraction? This would at least make matters intelligible."

Mrs. Gardiner was a little embarrassed, but such a chance of embittering his resentment was too good to be neglected, so she answered diplomatically:

"Well, you may be sure that such is what is believed in this place, and indeed it is the only rational solution."

"Well, such devotion is refreshing. But the deception—the cruel deception—and the organised, determined purpose with which she pursued this end of hers! Of course, it would seem very disinterested, this unflinching determination; but it is too noble, too much of duty. However, there, we must have an end of it now. I tell you, and I wish there were more here to listen, to hear me say that there shall be an end of it. Who is there? Let them come in, whoever it be."

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

NO. 227. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BORE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER LXI. "LOVE TOOK UP THE GLASS OF TIME."

WEEKS glided by, and still the same clear, bright frost, and low, cold, cheerful suns. The dogs so wild with spirits, the distant sounds travelling so sharp to the ear; ruddy sunsets; early darkness; and the roaring fires at home.

Sir Harry Rokestone's voice, clear and kindly, often heard through the house, calls me from the hall; he wants to know whether "little Ethel" will come out for a ride; or, if she would like a drive with him into the town to see the skaters, for in the shallower parts the mere is frozen.

One day I came into Sir Harry's room, on some errand, I forget what. Mr. Blount was standing, leaning on the mantelpiece, and Sir Harry was withdrawing a large key from the door of an iron safe, which seemed to be built into the wall. Each paused in the attitude in which I had found him, with his eyes fixed on me, in silence. I saw that I was in their way, and said, a little flurried:

"I'll come again; it was nothing of any consequence," and I was drawing back, when Sir Harry said, beckoning to me with his finger:

"Stay, little Ethel—stay a minute; I see no reason, Blount, why we should not tell the lassie."

Mr. Blount nodded acquiescence.

"Come here, my bonny Ethel," said Sir Harry, and turning the key again in the lock, he pulled the door open. "Look in; ye see that shelf? Well, mind that's where I'll leave auld Harry Rokestone's will; ye'll remember where it lies?"

Then he drew me very kindly to him, smoothed my hair gently with his hand, and said:

"God bless you, my bonny lassie," and kissed me on the forehead.

Then locking the door again, he said:

"Ye'll mind, it's this iron box, that's next the picture. That's all, lassie."

And thus dismissed, I took my departure.

In this retreat, time was stealing on with silent steps. Christmas was past. Mr. Marston had returned; he lived, at this season, more at our side of the lake, and the house was more cheerful.

Can I describe Mr. Marston with fidelity? Can even I rely upon my own recollection of him?

What had I become? A dreamer of dreams—a dupe of magic. Everything had grown strangely interesting; the lonely place was lonely no more; the old castle of Dorracleugh was radiant with unearthly light.

Unconsciously, I had become the captive of a magician. I had passed under a sweet and subtle mania, and was no longer myself. Little by little, hour by hour, it grew, till I was transformed.

Well, behold me now, wildly in love with Richard Marston.

Looking back now on that period of my history, I see plainly enough that it was my inevitable fate. So much together, and surrounded by a solitude, we were the only young people in the little group which formed our society. Handsome and fascinating—wayward, and even wicked he might have been, but that I might hope was past—he was energetic, clever, passionate; and of his admiration he never allowed me to be doubtful.

My infatuation had been stealing upon

me, but it was not until we had reached the month of May that it culminated in a scene that returns again and again in my solitary reveries, and always with the same tumult of sweet and bitter feelings.

On the day before that explanation took place, my diary, from which I have often quoted, says thus:

"May 9th.—There was no letter, I am sure, by the early post from Mr. Marston; Sir Harry or Mr. Blount would have been sure to talk of it at breakfast. It is treating his uncle, I think, a little cavalierly.

"Sailed across the lake to-day, alone, to Clusted, and walked about a quarter of a mile up the forest road. How beautiful everything is looking, but how melancholy! When last I saw this haunted wood, Sir Harry Rokestone and Mr. Marston were with me.

"It seems odd that Mr. Marston stays away so long, and hard to believe that if he tried he might not have returned sooner. He went on the 28th of April, and Mr. Blount thought he would be back again in a week: that would have been on the 5th of this month. I dare say he is glad to get away for a little time; I cannot blame him; I dare say he finds it often very dull, say what he will. I wonder what he meant, the other day, when he said he was 'born to be liked least where he loved most'? He seems very melancholy. I wonder whether there has been some old love, and parting? Why, unless he liked some one else, should he have quarrelled with Sir Harry, rather than marry as he wished him? Sir Harry would not have chosen any one for him who was not young and good-looking. I heard him say something one morning that showed his opinion upon that point; and young men, who don't like any one in particular, are easily persuaded to marry. Well, perhaps his constancy will be rewarded; it is not likely that the young lady should have given him up.

"May 10th.—How shall I begin? What have I done? Heaven forgive me if I have done wrong! Oh, kind, true friend, Sir Harry, how have I requited you! It is too late now; the past is past. And yet, in spite of this, how happy I am!

"Let me collect my thoughts, and write down as briefly as I can an outline of the events of this happy, agitating day.

"No lovelier May day was ever seen. I was enjoying a lonely saunter, at about one o'clock, under the boughs of Lynder Wood, here and there catching the gleam of the waters through the trees, and listening from

time to time to the call of the cuckoo from the hollows of the forest.

"In that lonely region there is no more lonely path than this.

"On a sudden, I heard a step approaching fast from behind me on the path, and, looking back, I saw Mr. Marston coming on, with a very glad smile, to overtake me. I stopped; I felt myself blushing. He was speaking as he approached: I was confused, and do not recollect what he said; but hardly a moment passed till he was at my side.

"He was smiling, but very pale. I suppose he had made up his mind to speak. He did not immediately talk of the point on which hung so much; he spoke of other things; I can recollect nothing of them.

"He began at length to talk upon that other theme that lay so near our hearts; our pace grew slower and slower as he spoke on, until we came to a stand-still under the great beech-tree, on whose bark our initials, now spread by time and touched with lichen, but possibly still legible, are carved.

"Well, he has spoken, and I have answered; I can't remember our words; but we are betrothed in the sight of Heaven by vows that nothing can ever cancel, till those holier vows, plighted at the altars, are made before God himself, or until either shall die.

"Oh! Richard, my love, and is it true? Can it be that you love your poor Ethel with a love so tender, so deep, so desperate? He has loved me, he says, ever since he first saw me, on the day after his escape, in the garden at Malory!

"I liked him from the first. In spite of all their warnings, I could not bring myself to condemn or distrust him long. I never forgot him during the years we have been separated; he has been all over the world since, and often in danger, and I have suffered such great and unexpected changes of fortune—to think of our being brought together at last! Has not Fate ordained it?

"The only thing that darkens the perfect sunshine of to-day is, that our attachment and engagement must be a secret.

"He says so, and I am sure he knows best.

"He says that Sir Harry has not half forgiven him yet, and that he would peremptorily forbid our engagement. He could unquestionably effect our separation, and make us both inexpressibly miserable. But when I look at Sir Harry's kind, melancholy face, and think of all he has done for

me, my heart upbraids me, and to-night I had to turn hastily away, for my eyes filled suddenly with tears."

CHAPTER LVII. AN AWKWARD PROPOSAL.

I WILL here make a few extracts more from my diary, because they contain matters, traced there merely in outline, and of which it is more convenient to present but a skeleton account.

"May 11th.—Richard went early to his farm to-day. I told him last night that I would come down to see him off this morning. But he would not hear of it; and again enjoined the greatest caution. I must do nothing to induce the least suspicion of our engagement, or even of our caring for each other. I must not tell Rebecca Torkill a word about it, nor hint it to any one of the few friends I correspond with. I am sure he is right; but this secrecy is very painful. I feel so treacherous, and so sad, when I see Sir Harry's kind face.

"Richard was back at three o'clock; we met by appointment, in the same path, in Lynder Wood.

"He has told me ever so much, of which I knew nothing before. Mr. Blount told him, he says, that Sir Harry means to leave me an annuity of two hundred a year. How kind, and generous! I feel more than ever the pain and meanness of my reserve. He intends to leave Richard eight hundred a year, and the farm at the other side of the lake. Richard thinks, if he had not displeased him, he would have done more for him. All this, which seems to me very noble, depends, however, upon his continuing to like us, as he does at present. Richard says that he will settle everything he has in the world upon me. It hurts me, his thinking me so mercenary, and talking so soon upon the subject of money and settlements; I let him see this, for the idea of his adding to what my benefactor Sir Harry intended for me had not entered my mind.

"'It is just, my darling, because you are so little calculating for yourself that I must look a little forward for you,' he said, and so tenderly. 'Whose business is it now to think of such things for you, if not mine? And you won't deny me the pleasure of telling you that I can prevent, thank Heaven, some of the dangers you were so willing to encounter for my sake.'

"Then he told me that the bulk of Sir Harry's property is to go to people not very nearly related to him, called Strafford;

and he gave me a great charge not to tell a word of all this to a living creature, as it would involve him in a quarrel with Mr. Blount, who had told him Sir Harry's intentions under the seal of secrecy.

"I wish I had not so many secrets to keep; but his goodness to me makes me love Sir Harry better every day. I told him all about Sir Harry's little talk with me about his will. I can have no secrets now from Richard."

For weeks, for months, this kind of life went on, eventless, but full of its own hopes, misgivings, agitations. I loved Golden Friars for many reasons, if things so light as associations and sentiments can so be called; founded they were, however, in imagination and deep affection. One of these was and is, that my darling mother is buried there; and the simple and sad inscription on her monument, in the pretty church, is legible on the wall opposite the Rokestone pew.

"That's a kind fellow, the vicar," said Sir Harry; "a bit too simple; but if other sirs were like him, there would be more folk in the church to hear the sermon!"

When Sir Harry made this speech, he and I were sitting in the boat, the light evening air hardly filled the sails, and we were tacking slowly back and forward on the mere, along the shore of Golden Friars.

It was a beautiful evening in August, and the little speech and our loitering here were caused by the sweet music, that pealed from the organ through the open church windows. The good old vicar was a fine musician; and often in the long summer and autumn evenings the lonely old man visited the organ-loft and played those sweet and solemn melodies that so well accorded with the dreamlike scene.

It was the music that recalled the vicar to Sir Harry's thoughts; but his liking for him was not all founded upon that, nor even upon his holy life and kindly ways. It was this: that when he read the service at mamma's funeral, the white-haired vicar, who remembered her a beautiful child, wept; and tears rolled down his old cheeks as with upturned eyes he repeated the noble and pathetic farewell.

When it was over, Sir Harry, who had had a quarrel with the vicar before, came over and shook him by the hand, heartily and long, speaking never a word; his heart was too full. And from that time he liked him, and did not know how to show it enough.

In these long, lazy tacks, sweeping slowly by the quaint old town in silence, broken only by the ripple of the water along the planks, and the sweet and distant swell of the organ across the water, the time flew by. The sun went down in red and golden vapours, and the curfew from the ivied tower of Golden Friars sounded over the darkened lake; the organ was heard no more; and the boat was now making her slow way back again to Dorracleugh.

Sir Harry looked at me very kindly, in silence, for awhile. He arranged a rug about my feet, and looked again in my face.

"Sometimes you look so like bonny Mabel; and when you smile—ye mind her smile? 'Twas very pretty."

Then came a silence.

"I must tell Renwick, when the shooting begins, to send down a brace of birds every day to the vicar," said Sir Harry. "I'll be away myself in a day or two, and I shan't be back again for three weeks. I'll take a house in London, lass; I won't have ye moping here too long; you'd begin to pine for something to look at, and folk to talk to, and sights to see."

I was alarmed, and instantly protested that I could not imagine any life more delightful than this at Golden Friars.

"No, no; it won't do; you're a good lass to say so; but it's not the fact; oh, no—it isn't natural; I can't take you to balls, and all that, for I don't know the people that give them; and all my great lady friends that I knew when I was a younker are off the 'hooks by this time; but there's plenty of sights to see besides—there's the waxworks, and the wild beasts, and the players, and the pictures, and all the shows."

"But I assure you, I like Golden Friars, and my quiet life at Dorracleugh, a thousand times better than all the sights and wonders in the world," I protested.

If he had but known half the terror with which I contemplated the possibility of my removal from my then place of abode, he would have given me credit for sincerity in my objections to our proposed migration to the capital.

"No, I say, it won't do; you women can't bring yourselves ever to say right out to us men what you think; you mean well; you're a good little thing; you don't want to put the auld man out of his way; but you'd like Lunnon best, and Lunnon ye shall have. You shall have a house you can see your auld acquaintance in, such, I

mean, as showed themselves good-natured when all went wrong wi' ye. You shall show them ye can haud your head as high as ever, and are not a jot down in the world. Never mind, I have said it."

In vain I protested; Sir Harry continued firm. One comfort was that he would not return to put his threat in execution for, at least, three weeks.

If anything were wanting to complete my misery, it was Sir Harry's saying, after a little silence:

"And, see, lass; don't you tell a word of it to Richard Marston; 'twould only make him fancy I'm going to take him; and I'd as lief take the devil; so, mind ye, it's a secret."

I smiled as well as I could, and said something, that seemed to satisfy him, or he took it for granted, for he went on and talked, being much more communicative this evening than usual; while my mind was busy with a miserable separation, and all the difficulties of correspondence that accompany a secret engagement.

So great was the anguish of these anticipations, that I hazarded one more effort to induce him to abandon his London plans, and to let me continue to enjoy my present life at Dorracleugh.

He was, however, quite immovable; he laughed; he told me again and again, that it would not "put him out of his way; not a bit," and he added, "you're falling into a moping, unnatural life, and you've grown to like it, and the more you like it, the less it is fit for you—if you lose your spirits you can't keep your health long."

And when I still persisted, he looked in my face a little darkly, on a sudden, as if a doubt as to my motive had crossed his mind. That look frightened me. I felt that matters might be worse.

Sir Harry had got it into his head, I found, that my health would break down, unless he provided the sort of change and amusement which he had decided on. I don't know to which of the wiseacres of Golden Friars I was obliged for this crotchet, which promised me such an infinity of suffering, but I had reason to think, afterwards, that old Miss Goulding of Wrybiggins was the friend who originated these misgivings about my health and spirits. She wished, I was told, to marry her niece to Richard Marston, and thought, if I and Sir Harry were out of the way, her plans would act more smoothly.

Richard was at home; it was our tea-

time; I had not an opportunity of saying a word to him unobserved. I don't know whether he saw by my looks that I was unhappy.

SONGS AND SAILORS.

I DO not purpose to write a history of the British tar from the earliest period to the present time, nor do I wish to inflict on the reader that preliminary sketch of the Viking, without which no dissertation on the maritime greatness of Britain is complete. With merciful reticence I abstain from tracing the cause, rise, and development of the idea that Britannia rules the waves, and I also forbear a disquisition on the gradual evolution of the British navy from the piratical and buccaneering elements of previous ages. Moreover, with manly fortitude I forego a comparison of the characters of Sir Andrew Barton, Sir Francis Drake, and Lord Nelson, and proceed at once to trace the development of the heroic and sentimental idea of the British tar as set forth in the works of English poets and dramatists.

That accomplished and prosperous poet, and "fine old English gentleman," Geoffrey Chaucer, in sketching his Canterbury pilgrims, never fails to invest each character, not only with strong individuality, but also with all the salient peculiarities of his class. In the prologue to the Canterbury Tales, the Shipman is drawn in by no means flattering colours, and it is worthy of remark that the first English poet who mentions a sailor, fails not to allude sarcastically to the ungracefulness of his equitation—a point made the most of by Smollett some three and a half centuries later. It is some consolation, however, to discover that so early as the reign of Richard the Second a man might be considered a good fellow even if he were not possessed of all the cardinal virtues :

A Shipman was ther, woned fer by West,
For ought I wote, he was of Dertemouth.
He rode upon a rounce as he couthe.

All in a goun of falding to the knee,
A dagger hanging by a las hadde hee,
About his nekke under his arm adoun,
The hote summer hadde made his hewe all broun.
And certainly he was a good felaw,
Ful many a draught of win he hadde draw
From Burdeux ward, while that the chapman slepe.
Of nice conscience toke he no kepe.
If that he faught, and hadde the higher hand,
By water he sent hem home to every land.

Having disposed of the moral peculiarities of the tar of the period, Chaucer next pro-

ceeds to dilate upon his extended geographical knowledge :

He knew wel alle the havens, as they were
Fro Gotland, to the Cape de finistere,
And every creke in Bretagne or in Spaine,
His barge ycleped was the Magdelaine.

Boasting that

Ther is but litel Latin in my mawe,

the Shipman proceeds to tell a story—telling unfortunately nothing of the manners, customs, and diction of the shipmen of the day, but reflecting severely on the loose manners of the clergy and the stinginess of the mercantile classes. In it, however, it is impossible to find any trace of chivalrous devotion to womankind, and it is singular that in the three centuries separating Chaucer from Wycherly, that not only is no trace of this sentiment to be discovered, but that the poetical and dramatic estimate of the sailor remained, in spite of the maritime glories of Elizabeth's reign, at the same uniformly low level.

In the character of Manly, in the Plain Dealer, we detect the primeval elements of honesty and plain-speaking, and also of that bluntness which is so essential to the marine composition. Manly, however, is an officer, a disappointed man, and his humour is of a grim misanthropic complexion, while his followers are simply rough sea-dogs, distinguished by their unshaken fidelity to their captain, and enlivened, moreover, by touches of coarse fun. The captain himself disdains the use of nautical metaphor, albeit his followers indulge largely therein; but in Congreve's comedy of Love for Love, we discover a thorough sea-dog, who, although commander of a ship, has none of the refined epigrammatic savageness of Manly, and cannot utter a single speech without betraying his profession. Ben cannot endure the idea of matrimony, for "A man that is married, d'ye see, is no more like another man than a galley-slave is like one of us free sailors; he is chained to an oar all his life, and mayhap forced to tug a leaky vessel into the bargain."

In his interview with Miss Prue, Ben appears to even less advantage than in the preceding scene, and on the young lady telling him in somewhat uncomplimentary terms that she does not like him, he proceeds in the roughest manner to compare her with Mrs. Frail, very much to the advantage of the latter lady. "Who are you? You heard t'other handsome young woman speak civilly to me of her own accord :

whatever you think of yourself, gad I don't think you are any more to compare to her than a can of small beer to a bowl of punch." The young lady appears to be equal to the occasion, retorts with considerable asperity, and crushes Ben with the epithets, "sea-calf" and "tar-barrel."

The Earl of Dorset's famous song,

To all you ladies now on land,
We men of sea indite,
But first we'd have you understand
How hard it is to write,

is the work of a fresh-water sailor, and is completely devoid of the true salt-water twang. Lord Dorset went to sea to fight the Dutch at a period when the British navy was at a very low ebb. It must not be forgotten that, down to a comparatively late period, men were more many-sided than at present. A man of fair ability might easily become, as Mrs. Malaprop says of Cerberus, "three gentlemen at once," and figure, by turns, afloat, in the field, and at the council board. Blake was "admiral and general at sea," a designation odd enough to the ears of degenerate moderns who devote an entire life to the acquirement of one specialty.

Defoe, although author of the immortal Robinson Crusoe, of the strange adventures of Captain Singleton, and of other narratives of the great deep, is by no means a flattering painter of nautical character. Hogarth portrays the sailor in anything but heroic fashion, and, in his Industrious and Idle Apprentices, sends the idle youth to sea, as if that element were the natural destiny of the "ne'er-do-weel." In the whole of Smollett's works are to be found no more grotesque characters or caricatures than Commodore Trunnion and his "follower or henchman," Tom Pipes.

There can be little doubt, indeed, that the heroic side of the British sailor remained almost invisible to the British eye, until the long war with France, and the songs of Dibdin, combined together to produce the ideal man-of-war's man. In the mean time, however, the tar had not been entirely overlooked on the sentimental side, as is proved by Gay's charming ballad of Black-eyed Susan. Gay, however, had a knack of investing anybody or anything with a halo of sentiment, and it is not to be wondered at that the author who succeeded in writing a Newgate pastoral, and in making Captain Macheath an interesting person, should have discovered the first authentic instance of the romantic sailor.

Apart from the songs which depict the

British tar as a hero are some which represent him as the victim of an unhappy attachment, and others which set forth in strong relief the philosophic or devil-may-care side of his character. Among those of the latter classes we may select two for the purpose of illustrating divers phases of the marine mind. The sentimental tar is the hero of the mournful but punning ballad of Young Ben who "was a carpenter, a carpenter by trade." While engaged in "fetching a walk" one day with his betrothed, one "Sally Brown, which was a lady's maid," young Ben is pounced upon by the press-gang and summarily "brought to," carried off to the "tender-ship" in spite of the "hardship" of his case, and serves the king manfully for three years. At the expiration of this period he returns in search of Sally Brown, who was at first inconsolable at his mishap, and is horror-struck to find that Miss Brown has during his absence proved false, and now has "another Ben whose christian name was John." After addressing a few remonstrances to Miss Brown, Ben gives way to despair, and

Pondering o'er his 'bacca-box, he heaved a heavy sigh,
And then began to eye his pipe, and then to pipe his eye.

It is further recorded that this victim of ill-requited affection "chewed his pigtail till he died."

His death, which happened in his berth, some forty odd can tell;
They went and told the sexton, and the sexton toll'd the bell.

Let us now contrast for one moment the lachrymose lover of Miss Brown, who after all was not a genuine salt, but a mere carpenter who had gone to sea on compulsion—and perhaps is therefore hardly a fair sample of his class—with that jovial specimen of the true British sailor, Jack Robinson. Jack arrives at Portsmouth after several years of foreign service, and like a hearty fellow as he is, accosts the first man whom he meets with an inquiry as to the whereabouts of Polly Gray, the idol of his heart. The stranger says he does not happen to know the lady, but proposes that Jack should forthwith partake of a "good can of flip." His conduct at this trying moment gives the keynote to Jack's character. He does not fret and worry about Miss Gray, but proceeds to enjoy his flip.

In a public-house they sot them down,
And talked of admirals of high renown,
They drank as much grog as came to half a crown
Did this strange man and Jack Robinson.

Jack was unwittingly drinking flip on the brink of a volcano, for

When they came the reckoning to pay,
The landlady came in fine array,
"Why, shiver me!" says Jack, "Why, here's Polly Gray!"

and gives vent to some premature jubilation on recognising his ladye-love, who soon dashes his spirits by informing him that she has "got a mate," having long since given J. R. over for dead on evidence which to the general reader appears, to say the least, unsatisfactory:

"For somebody told me that somebody had said
That somebody had heard that somebody had read
In some newspaper or other as how that you was dead."
"Why, I never died at all," said Jack Robinson.

After this rather superfluous assertion of his undiminished vitality, J. R. makes a few remarks of a tender nature respecting a handkerchief that Miss Gray had given him on his departure, and declares that:

"I've often looked upon it, and then I've thought of thee!

Now upon my soul I have!" said Jack Robinson.

There are no tears, no blubbering, no whining appeals on this occasion. Mr. Robinson faces the position with the mind of a philosopher, and dismisses the unpleasant subject from his mind for ever.

Jack filled his pipe and finished his glass,
And then he cried out, "Alas! alas!
That ever I should live to be made such an ass,
To be bilked by a woman," said Jack Robinson.

"I'll get another ship, and I'll sail away again
To Holland or to Greenland, to Turkey, France, or Spain,
But wherever I may go, to Portsmouth never come again!"

He was off before you could say "Jack Robinson!"

Here we have the type of the man of action, who drowns sentimental grievances in work and liquor, a very different creation to the ideal tar of Dibdin, Douglas Jerrold, and T. P. Cooke. Dibdin, versatile as he was, is never so much at home as when portraying the many good qualities of the heroic tar. No prettier love-song exists than the Heart of a Tar, and in the True English Sailor Dibdin lays down the law very authoritatively and very neatly:

Jack dances and sings, and is always content,
In his vows to his lass he'll ne'er fail her;
His anchor's a-trip when his money's all spent,
And this is the life of a sailor.

Long-side of an enemy, boldly and brave,
He'll with broadside on broadside regale her;
Yet he'll sigh to the soul o'er that enemy's grave,
So noble's the mind of a sailor.

To rancour unknown, to no passion a slave,
Nor unmanly, nor mean, nor a railer;
He's gentle as mercy, as fortitude brave,
And this is a true English sailor.

This doctrine once laid down, all becomes easy, and there can be little doubt of the excellent influence exercised by

such songs as Dibdin's upon the maritime fraternity. Very few thoroughly hearty fellows feel annoyed at the recognition of their good qualities, and those fellows who are not "thorough"—the vast army of moderate mortals, marine and terrestrial—cannot fail to be improved by constantly having a high type of manhood set before them, coupled with the assumption that they more or less partake of it.

As a proof of the strength of Dibdin's songs, many instances may be brought forward of the dramatisation of his ditties, and of the expansion of a story knit compactly together in a few stanzas into a full-blown nautical novel. Captains Marryat and Chamier did much to maintain the noble idea of the British tar, without losing sight of his humorous and Bohemian instincts; but the highest expression of the transcendental conception of sailorhood was reserved for Douglas Jerrold. In Black-eyed Susan—founded, of course, upon Gay's ballad—we find the sailor in his glory, trim and "taut." He thinks foul scorn of the lubbers who would "hang out false signals to a petticoat," falls foul of them at once, without waiting to "row alongside," rescues woman in distress, and then—as is not uncommonly the case—gets into trouble. In his speech to the court-martial both pathos and nautical metaphor are plentifully used, and William ultimately sails off triumphantly with the black-eyed one under his lee.

Albeit the poets of our own day have failed to produce such stirring battle-songs as the Mariners of England, the Saucy Arethusa, and Trafalgar Bay, the home affections of the tar have occasionally been set in strong relief. Kingsley's Three Fishers is likely to survive many of his more ambitious efforts, and it is pleasant to find that Doctor W. C. Bennett's Songs for Sailors—a recently published volume—has been adopted by the authorities "for use in ships." A Fisher-Wife's Song is so perfect an expression of the anxiety of those "near and dear" to the valiant men who "go down to the sea in ships," that it is impossible to refrain from quoting it.

A FISHER-WIFE'S SONG.

"Oh, gull, gull! grey gull of the sea,
Gull skimming landwards, O tell it to me;
Tell me my Philip's brown trawler you see,
Riding safe home to her port on her lee,
Beating safe, safely home to Clovelly and me.

"Oh, gull, gull! oh, winged but like you,
That I might the foam-thickened storm circle through
Till his red sail I saw, and his dear face I knew,
His hand to his helm, and his heart to us true,
Beating safe to Clovelly, and oh, to us too!"

"Oh, wife, wife! I've swept the black squall
That's hiding the in-rolling thunder from all.
Before Him, who saves, with your little ones fall.
I've seen the best handler of oar and of trawl
To Clovelly and you beating safely through all."

It is depressing to find that in all the heroic and sentimental narratives of which the British tar has been the subject, the old world theory of navigation prevails. The "wind that blows," and the "ship that goes" are no longer correlative terms. "A wet sheet and a flowing sail," and the "breeze that follows fast," are now comparatively unimportant, and the "weather gauge" has become a matter of less moment than a high number of revolutions. What sarcastic old salts call the poetry of the tea-kettle has not yet been produced, but still we need not despair. Swelling sails may have disappeared, pig-tails, slacks, and even the noble manoeuvre yclept "splicing the mainbrace" may have followed them, and the science of maritime warfare may be reduced to an affair of artillerymen, stokers, and patent iron-mongery, but the solid residuum of true manhood is yet with us, and while that remains the halo of heroism will never fail to surround the British tar.

DUMAS THE ELDER'S COOKERY.

ALEXANDRE DUMAS the Elder was an excellent example of the maxim "Ex nihilo, nihil fit," "Out of nothing, nothing is produced." Without coals, you can't have steam, nor engine-work, nor locomotion. Dumas, eminently hardworking and locomotive, kept up his steam by a liberal supply of fuel, and that of the choicest quality.

Alexandre Dumas was a famous eater, just as he was a delightful romancer. His powerful constitution, which Michelet called "a force of nature," producing much, expended much. Few men travelled, contrived, or wrote more than he did. Rarely has a robuster frame supported a more prolific brain. He instinctively studied what some one has called "the system of alimentation required by superior creatures." His *Mémoires* and his *Impressions de Voyage* prove that at an early age he understood the part "la table" plays in life. His travels afterwards made him familiar with a multitude of exotic preparations.

When one's thoughts are daily occupied with a subject, which subject is a matter of vital necessity, it is natural to write a book

about it, especially, also, when one is a book-writer by trade. Dumas, who was a proficient in cookery, consequently wrote a cookery-book. "I should like," he often said, "to conclude my literary work of five hundred volumes with a *livre de cuisine*." We feel inclined to suspect that he applied to this book also his usual mode of composition; namely, to finish the work in his head before putting pen to paper, and that death unfortunately intervened between this mental completion and the full transcription. We are told, however, that the *Grand Dictionnaire de Cuisine* was written in the course of 1869, and the manuscript delivered to his friend and publisher, Alphonse Lemerre, in March, 1870. The condition of Paris after that date explains the delay of its publication. At any rate, we have a posthumous treatise which bears evident marks of the master hand, even though workmen may have been employed on the stitching of the notes together. It weighs five pounds, and costs twenty francs—a proof how highly Monsieur Lemerre values it. We accept the legacy such as it comes to us, though sometimes, as is the way of the world, wishing it were fatter and fuller.

Shall we preach the importance of eating and drinking—that is, of eating and drinking well? Dumas's motto is, "Man is fed, not by what he swallows, but by what he digests." Man, at his birth, received from his stomach the command to eat at least three times a day, in order to restore the strength taken out of him by work and, still more frequently, by idleness. In whatever country man is born, whatever be his religious scruples, eating is a necessity—the grand preoccupation both of savage and of civilised manhood. Only, the savage eats out of sheer starvation; the civilised man through gourmandise. Dumas wrote for the civilised; the savage needs nothing to sharpen his appetite.

Of appetites, the sorts are three. That which is felt after a fast, an imperious sensation which never squabbles over a bill of fare, and which would be satisfied, in case of need, with a bit of raw meat as well as with a roast and truffled pheasant. That felt when, seated at table without being hungry, some savoury dish is approvingly tasted; which sort of appetite gave rise to the proverb, "*L'appetit vient en mangeant*." The third is the appetite excited (after the savoury dish arriving in the middle of a dinner) by some delicious dainty brought in at the close, when sober guests would

rise from table without regret, although they linger there under the influence of this last temptation.

Man ought to eat in a sitting posture. Homer—and his heroes have excellent appetites—makes the Greeks and the Trojans eat seated on separate seats, and not crowded on benches. When Ulysses arrives at Alcinoüs's palace, the prince orders a magnificent chair to be brought him. The Egyptians, we learn from Athenæus, took their meals seated at table. The Romans did the same up to the close of the second Punic war, which ended B.C. 202, when they followed the lazy and inconvenient Greek custom of reclining, at dinner, on luxurious couches, each guest having a couch to himself. Persons invited brought their napkins, some of which were of cloth of gold. Alexander Severus was content with striped linen napkins woven for his sole and special use. Instead of ladies leaving the table in the middle of dessert, at Athens and Corinth it was the moment when they entered.

Spices, now universally employed in cookery, were exceedingly rare before Columbus had discovered America, and Vasco de Gama the Cape route to India. In 1263, they were so scarce and valuable that the Abbot of St. Gilles, in Languedoc, having a great favour to beg of King Louis le Jeune, could think of nothing more persuasive to send with his petition than a few parcels of spices. The presents made to judges were called "*épices*," and the expression is not quite obsolete. Pepper has only been popularised in France for a hundred and fifteen or twenty years. Monsieur Poivre, a native of Lyons, transported it from the Ile de France to Cochin-China. Previously, pepper was worth its weight in gold. Grocers who were lucky enough to possess a few ounces, inscribed on their shop-front "*Epicier, Poivrier*," "*Spicer, Pepperer*."

Have spices stimulated man's intellect? Are we to thank them for Ariosto, Tasso, Boccaccio? Did spice inspire Titian's masterpieces? Dumas is inclined to think so; for Leonardo da Vinci, Tintoretto, Paul Veronese, Guido, and Raffael, were all of them distinguished gourmands.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, under Louis the Twelfth and Francis the First, people dined at ten in the morning and supped at four; the rest of the day was occupied by parties, walks, or rides. In the seventeenth century, they dined at noon and supped at seven. The curious will find a number of forgotten and lost dishes men-

tioned in the *Mémoires* of Louis the Thirteenth's doctor, Hérouard, who recorded the breakfasts and dinners set before the king. At that time, in great families, dinner was announced by blowing a horn. Hence the phrase, "*Cornez le diner*," "*Horn the dinner*," now out of use.

The first restaurant in Paris was established by one Boulanger, in the Rue des Poulies, in the middle of the last century. His door was surmounted by the device, "*Venite omnes, qui stomacho laboratis, et ego restorabo vos*," "*Come, all ye who are faint at stomach, and I will restore you*." The invention of restaurants was a grand step in advance. The few hotels that had tables d'hôte gave no more food than was absolutely necessary to keep body and soul together. The *traiteurs* or cook-shops sold nothing less than whole joints. To give a dinner to a friend, you were obliged to buy an entire leg of mutton, or a turkey, or a fillet of beef. There was genius in the bold conception of a completely new branch of trade; that, if one customer came to eat the wing of a fowl, another would be glad to pick the leg.

The First Revolution, which demolished almost everything else, increased the number of restaurants. The cooks and stewards whose wealthy masters were either guillotined or émigrés, turned philanthropists on finding themselves out of place, and devoted their talents to the public service. Subsequently, without abandoning their profession, they asserted its aristocratic origin. After the first restoration of the Bourbons, in 1814, the restaurateur Beauvilliers appeared in his dining-rooms in court dress with his sword by his side. After Paris, San Francisco is the town which numbers the most restaurateurs, of all countries, Chinese included. An authentic bill of fare comprises, amongst other delicacies, dog soup, cat cutlets, roast dog, dog pâté, and stewed rats.

Dumas, when projecting his work on cookery, never dreamt of confining himself to the kitchen. His book was a recreation; and his only difficulty lay, not in the matter, but in the form. If he made it a discursive and fanciful essay, like Brillat-Savarin's *Physiologie du Goût*, the profession, cooks and cookesses, would not vouchsafe it the slightest attention. If he made it a mere practical treatise, like *La Cuisinière Bourgeoise*, the general reader would exclaim, "*It was well worth Dumas's while to turn his back on plays and novels, to tell us, in a volume of eleven hundred pages, that the*

rabbit likes to be skinned alive, but that the hare prefers to wait!" The author had a higher ambition, to be read by the reading public and practised by the professional artist. Above all, after travelling in Italy and Spain, where the eating is bad, and in the Caucasus and Africa, where there is no eating at all, good or bad, he wished to indicate the means of better eating where it is bad, and of eating something where the bills of fare are blanks.

In Spain, for instance, the vinegar is tasteless, while the oil on the contrary is powerfully rancid. Consequently, it is impossible to eat salad, although the heat makes you long for a mouthful of something cool and fresh. Dumas discovered the remedy by substituting raw egg-yolks for oil, and lemon-juice for vinegar. This mixture, poured over tender hearts, whether of cos or cabbage lettuce, and sufficiently supported by pepper and salt, supplied an exquisite salad which he finally preferred to salad as usually prepared in France.

But, after all, Dumas thinks that mankind are not born to live on salad, but that they eat it out of whim and excessive civilisation, and what drives him the more to insist on this opinion is the fact that, in many houses, the salad is made an appendage to the roast. The idea of eating salad with a haunch of roe-deer well mariné, with pheasants arrived at exactly the critical point, with woodcocks reclining on their luscious toasts! It is simply rank and flagrant heresy. One dish spoils the other. All high-flavoured game should be eaten alone, with the gravy which is logically its essential sauce.

But a different sort of heresy, a culinary impiety, to use the proper word, although it has prevailed at the best—no, the grandest—tables, is to have the salad made by a servant! Why, for success in this complex work, it requires a physician, or at least a chemist! Hence, what melancholy salads! Recal your sad and painful souvenirs. Have you ever tasted, at sundry grand dinners, salads into which a fellow in cotton gloves mixes you two pinches of salt, one of pepper, a spoonful of vinegar, and two of oil? The knowing ones add a spoonful of mustard!

And they hand you this insipid mess, when? At the moment when your hunger is three parts satisfied, and you want something piquant to restore your lost appetite. It is the duty of the master or the mistress of the house, if they are worthy of that sacred office, to undertake the seasoning of

this dish. And the task should be completed a full hour before dinner, during which hour it should three or four times be turned and returned.

Salad is an art with more variations than space will allow us to introduce here. You are acquainted (perhaps not) with all the salad plants, from broad-leaved endive to cos lettuce. Only, "in the extraordinary case of your liking the sort known as Capuchin's beard," Dumas gives the counsel, which you will think strange at first, but whose excellence you will afterwards acknowledge, to mix violets with it, and to throw in two or three pinches of the violet powder (pulverised orris-root or Florentine iris), which is put into little bags to perfume linen, and likewise to powder our precious babes.

It is not generally known that that invigorating viand the Bifteck was the first connecting link, in the present century, between those then mortal enemies, the French and the English. Dumas remembers having witnessed the birth of the Bifteck in France, after the campaign of 1815, when the English remained two or three years in Paris. Till then, the respective cookeries had been separated by as wide a gulf as had divided the politics of the two nations. No little terror was felt by French minds at finding beefsteaks stealthily creeping into the foremost kitchens. Nevertheless, being an eclectic people, without prejudices—we were not aware of that—as soon as they perceived that the gift did not poison them, they adventurously held out their plates, and voted to Bifteck the freedom of the city.

There exists, however, a radical difference between French and English beefsteaks. We have taken novices to Parisian restaurants, to enjoy their astonishment at discovering that they could get, in France, a beefsteak as tender as in England. As tender, yes; of equal flavour, no; for the French steak is always the "filet" sautéed with mushrooms, potatoes, or otherwise. The French make beefsteaks with the underpart of the loin, called by old-fashioned cooks "the roll," whereas it is the rump which furnishes the true English steak. But this part of the animal, Dumas explains, is always tenderer with us; because we feed our oxen better, and kill them younger than they do in France.

"English cooks," he says, "take a rump of beef, and cut it into slices half an inch thick. They flatten it a little, and cook it on an iron plate made expressly for the

purpose, employing coals instead of charcoal. The true fillet steak should be laid on a hot gridiron over a bright charcoal fire, and turned only once, to retain the gravy, which will mingle in the dish with the maitre d'hôtel sauce. In order to form a correct opinion of rump-steak, I eat it every time I go to England, and always with renewed pleasure. It is infinitely more savoury than fillet steak. You should taste it in the English taverns, sautéed with Madeira, or anchovy butter, or a bed of watercress well dashed with vinegar. I would advise it to be eaten with pickled gherkins, if any nation in the world knew how to pickle gherkins.

"For French bifteck, the best sauce is maitre d'hotel, because there is a predominant flavour of fine herbs and lemon. But allow me to make an observation. I behold our cooks beat their biftecks on the kitchen table with the flat side of their cleaver. I believe the practice to be a serious error, and that they thereby knock out of the meat certain nutritive principles which have an important part to play when the mastication scene arrives. In general, ruminant animals are better in England than in France, because, throughout their life, they are treated with particular care. The sheep, fed on grass fresher than ours, have flavours which are to us unknown. Where English cookery is completely at fault, is in the domain of sauces—as Voltaire said, they have seventy religions, and only one sauce; but big fishes and butchers' meat are infinitely finer in London than in Paris."

Cutlets attained their climax of perfection under Louis the Eighteenth, who, even in his tête-à-tête dinners with Monsieur d'Avary, lavished the most elaborate luxury. His cutlets were not simply grilled on the gridiron, but between two other cutlets. The partaker thereof himself opened this marvellous cutlet on his plate, so as not to lose an atom of the perfume or the gravy. His ortolans were roasted inside partridges stuffed with truffles, making majesty sometimes hesitate for minutes between the bird and the cryptogam. A tasting jury sat on the fruits proposed to be served at the royal table; Monsieur Petit-Radel, librarian to the Institut, was the official degustator of peaches—respecting whom, a peach-testing anecdote has the only fault of being too long to transfer here.

It is a pleasure to find that our diletante cook had so good an opinion of Eng-

lish comestibles. About some of them he tells us more than we knew before. Ale is so called because it means everything, all; for the reason that, with the English, this drink can replace every other beverage. It is a liquor obtained by the infusion of "moult," and only differs from beer in the small quantity of hops put into it. It is pleasant tippie, but tipsifying; in reasonable doses very refreshing.

Our gilet-pie passes, through a transformation scene, into pâté de gillettes piaïé à l'anglaise, enveloped in a grand and costly recipe, which would make an English cook (good plain) throw herself out of window in despair if her kitchen were not down-stairs in the area. But gilets, abatis, have a much wider sense in French than in English cookery. They comprise cockscombs, the pinions, gizzards, necks, &c., of all poultry and game, sweet-breads, calves' brains, sheeps' tongues, dorsal nerves, and other trimmings.

Apple's cake, of the ordinary kind, and apple's cake of the Queen Anne, are preparations which perfidious Albion has pilfered from Gallia's treasury. Are not the two recipes to be found in French formularies of the seventeenth century, and notably in the "Menu Royal des diners de Marly"? The English have only followed the original tradition, and forced on those sweets the name they now bear. There is another cake or kake (pronounce "kick") which is popular, whether with raisins or without, besides the ceremonial "kick" compounded when the English proceed to marry their children.

Plum-pudding is a farinaceous dish without which no Englishman can make a good dinner. It has also of late invaded France, where they often spoil it (in your critic's opinion) by baking instead of boiling it. Note, for a wonder, that Dumas's elaborate receipt does not forget—as has been forgotten—the napkin or basin in which to boil it. On the whole, we must allow, he does justice to pudding, giving an approving welcome to bread, cabinet, and grand marrow pudding. Amongst sauces—a wilderness of sweets and savouries—he originates a novel form of the much-vexed orthography of—ket-chop.

Like Doctor Johnson, he makes his Dictionnaire the vehicle of his own private prejudices. Salmon à la genevoise is a sad take in, he thinks. The head and shoulders of the fish ought to be cooked with certain surroundings, including a bath of wine to inundate the whole. But the Genevese

never practise the receipt. They pour the wine down their throats instead of putting it into the fish-kettle.

AT AN OLD COUNTRY HOUSE.

FAR from the moil of road or rail, a grand old mansion stands,
'Neath stately wealth of beech, and oak, mid green and wooded lands.
No whistling peasant breaks the calm, no sound falls on the ear
Save pipe of blackbird on the thorn, or crop of browsing deer.
Grey gleam the gables in the light of half-awakened day,
The turret clock sounds out its chimes, and as they die away,
The music of their echoing tones rings forth a requiem sweet,
Of those who lived, and loved, and died, at that old country seat!
Lived—maybe, centuries ago—when knighthood's open hand,
Showered largesse on the vassal crew, who tilled the ancestral land;
When ancient chivalry outshone the gold of modern greed,
And knightly spurs were never won without a knightly deed!
The dial-plate, with moss o'ergrown, still marks the passing hour,
The jasmine stars still blossom sweet, the crimson roses flower;
The chestnut spikes with summer snow still strew the shaven lawn,
And from the lilac thicket still, the brown thrush hails the dawn.

The violet cloud-banks in the sky are shot with crimsoned gold
And still the nightingale sings on, the song she sang of old.
Still o'er yon belt of black-plumed pines, the moon's white crescent shows,
And onward still, 'tween rush-girt banks, the lilled river flows.
But ah! that grand old country seat, has seen long since its day,
The glories of its lords of old, have waned, and passed away.
Yet long may its grey battlements, amid the old oaks stand,
A landmark to us, of the times when Honour ruled the land!

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

THE FORTY-SECOND HIGHLANDERS (THE BLACK WATCH).

IN 1725, the government enrolled six companies of the warlike young Scottish mountaineers, to enforce the Disarming Act, to guard the streets of Edinburgh, to prevent revengeful reprisals and plunder between rival clans, and to stop the frequent forays on the peaceful Lowlands. The officers were drawn chiefly from the loyal clans of Campbell, Grant, and Munroe. As the clan tartans of the regiment were chiefly black, blue, and dark green, their sombre dress procured

the newly-raised soldiers the nickname of the "Black Watch," in contradistinction to the regular soldiers of King George, who were called in the Highlands the "Red Soldiers."

On the breaking out of the war with Spain, George the Second enlisted four more companies of these hardy troops, and formed a regiment, which he placed under the command of Colonel John Earl of Crawford and Lindsay, with plenty of Munroes, Colquhouns, Campbells, Grants, and Macphersons as subordinate officers. These Highland soldiers, inured to hardships by long days of deer-stalking, clan fights, and mountain clamber, wore the picturesque national dress. Their arms were more numerous than those of any other soldiers. They carried a musket, bayonet, and large basket-hilted claymore (which they could wield with deadly effect), while those who chose were permitted to carry a dirk, a pair of pistols, and a nail-studded target. Their sword-belts were black, their cartouch-boxes were carried in front, and they all wore the large badger-skin sporran or pouch.

In 1743, George the Second resolved to send the Black Watch to Flanders, where we were then supporting the House of Austria against the Elector of Bavaria and the King of France. The regiment was reviewed on Finchley Common by General Wade, and two of the soldiers were taken to St. James's Palace to perform the broadsword exercise in the king's presence, to the astonishment of the court ladies, few of whom had ever before seen men in petticoats. On the point of embarkation, one hundred of the men, reluctant to leave their country, and under an apprehension that they were to be sent to the West Indies, mutinied, and started to return to Scotland, but were quickly pursued by squadrons of Wade's Horse and Churchill's Dragoons. The Highlanders, strongly posted in Lady Wood, near Oundle, in Northamptonshire, prepared at first for a stubborn resistance, but when convinced of the mistake under which they laboured, they surrendered. Three of the mutineers were shot at the Tower of London, and the remainder were drafted to the colonies they had so much dreaded.

The Black Watch joined the army a few days after our victory at Dettingen. At Fontenoy the Highlanders fought like lions, sweeping the French sharpshooters before them over the plain; they forced a breastwork with sword, pistol, and dirk;

and impatient of the stolid help of the Dutch, stormed, sword in hand, a post held by the French Guards. Thrice the French gave way, but the last charge of Marshal Saxe (then fast dying) repulsed us, and we fell back covered by the Highlanders, who lined the hedges, and obstinately covered the retreat. At the last pass, Lord Crawford took off his hat, and thanked the Black Watch, saying they had acquired as much honour in covering the retreat as if they had won the battle. The Highlanders, offered anything they chose to ask as a reward by the duke, only begged for the pardon of a comrade of theirs sentenced to be flogged, which, they said, would be a disgrace to their families and their country. A French writer speaks of "the Highland furies who rushed in upon us with more violence than a sea driven by a tempest." The regiment lost two officers and thirty men, while ninety-seven were wounded.

In 1754, when the French under Montcalm attacked us in America, the Forty-second were again to the fore. In 1758, they fought desperately in an attempt to storm the fortress of Ticonderoga, a place situated on a spit of land between Lake Champlain and Lake George, surrounded on three sides by water, and on half the other side by a morass. To protect the opening there were high entrenchments, flanked by three batteries, and every interstice blocked with felled trees. Abercromby, learning that three thousand French were advancing to relieve the place, ordered an assault. The grenadiers were to lead, and in the reserve were the Highlanders. Our engineers had reported too favourably of the Ticonderoga breastworks. The traverses and trees were lined by two thousand eight hundred French troops of the line, and our men fell fast from the fire of their sheltered enemies. Our artillery had not been brought, and no scaling ladders had been provided. The Highlanders, impatient of the delay, pushed to the front, and hewed a way through the trees with their broadswords. The French being thrust back into their fort, the Highlanders climbed up on each other's shoulders, and dug holes for their feet with their swords and bayonets; but for a time every man was hurled down the moment he reached the top. At length, Captain John Campbell (one of the very men presented to George the Second in 1743) forced a way into the breastwork, but was instantly bayoneted. After four

hours of this hopeless work the general sounded a retreat; but the Highlanders' blood was up, and they were reluctant to obey. It was not till Colonel Grant had given a third order that they fell back, leaving behind them eight officers, nine sergeants, two hundred and ninety-seven men killed; and seventeen officers and three hundred and six soldiers wounded. "The Forty-second fought that day," says an eye-witness, "like lions breaking from their chains." Careless of death, they were only anxious to avenge their slain friends. They battled like men of ancient Rome. Even those who were mortally wounded, cried to their companions not to waste a thought upon them, but to follow on and save their honour. Our general, however, disconcerted by his loss, gave up any further attempt on Ticonderoga. For their extraordinary bravery in this discomfiture, the king conferred upon the regiment the title of the "Forty-second Royal Highland Regiment of Foot."

In the American war the Highlanders laid aside their pistols and swords, and they were not resumed. Their pistols were considered useless, and the broadswords impeded the men as they passed through the American forests. An anecdote of this war in 1777 is too good to be lost. At a skirmish round some provision waggons at Pisguata, a Sergeant Macgregor, of the Forty-second, was left half dead upon the ground. His silver-laced jacket and silver-buckled shoes attracted an American plunderer. His party being on the retreat, the Yankee threw Sandie on his back to strip him at his leisure. Unluckily, however, for Uncle Sam, Macgregor, reviving, snatched out his dirk, and clutching his captor's throat, swore he would stab him dead unless he instantly carried him to Cornwallis's camp, which the Yankee reluctantly did, avowing to our general (for Macgregor had again fainted) that he could not help himself. These Highlanders, indeed, were as "cute" as they were staunch. In a foraging expedition in 1777, in the woods, one of the Forty-second suddenly caught sight of a Yankee. Both men's guns were unloaded, and each sprang to a tree for covert while he loaded. Each man was afraid to venture out first, and each kept close to his tree, reluctant to play the first card. At last the Highlander, clapping his bonnet on his bayonet, moved it gently just outside the tree. The same moment it dropped with a

bullet through it, but the next instant the Highlander's gun was at the American's heart, and a rough voice shouted, "Tam her, surrender!"

One day, in the Duke of York's inglorious campaign in Flanders, four hundred French cavalry (mistaken for Hessians) dashed into Alost, and slashed at all they met. Macdonald, one of the Forty-second, passing through the market-place at the time with a basket of rations on his head, was attacked by a French horseman, who struck him on the arm. The tough fellow, however, nothing daunted, drew his bayonet and attacked the Frenchman, who then spurred off, and Macdonald carried home his basket, grumbling, as he went along, at having forgot his "gude braidsword."

The Forty-second had soon to exchange the fruit-trees and plains of Flanders for the precipices and palm-trees of the West Indies. The French and the Caribs needed correction by steel and lead, and they got it. Having soon driven the French out of the Vizie Mountain, up which the Highlanders clambered like goats, they were then sent into the woods after the Caribs, and had to chase them up precipices, through forests, and down ravines. "In the attack on the Vizie," says Colonel Stewart, who was present, "I left one of my men behind (because he was married) to take charge of the soldiers' knapsacks. At the third redoubt some one tapped my shoulder, and, looking round, I saw his Amazonian wife with her clothes tacked up to her knees, cheering and animating the men. 'Well done my Highland lads,' she cried. 'Look how the brigands scamper. Come on, and drive them from the next hill.'"

In an ambuscade Colonel Graham was shot through the body, and dragged over the rough channel of a stream to the sea-shore. He returned to England very ill, and never recovered till the evening of the illuminations for Camperdown, when the smoke of the flambeaux set him coughing, and he threw up a piece of cloth (no doubt driven in by the ball), and from that hour recovered as by a charm.

In one of these West Indian fights, Colonel David Stewart (in his sketches of the Highlanders) remarked how soon his young Highland recruits acquired a taste for blood. He particularly noticed one young fellow whom he had seen turn pale and shudder at a soldier's pugilistic fight. At the Vizie redoubts (between the second and third) he came on this same lad with his

foot on a French soldier, whom he had bayoneted, trying to twist his head off. Stewart desired him to let the body alone.

"Oh, the brigand," said the youth. "I must take off his head."

But on being reminded that there were live Frenchmen facing him, who also had heads, he sprang forward to the front.

In 1800 this intrepid regiment was sent to Egypt with Abercromby's forces to land at Aboukir. With thirteen thousand two hundred and thirty-four men, we had to land in the face of thirty thousand. Seven days Abercromby had to wait, a violent gale preventing the landing. At two A.M., on the 8th of March, a rocket gave the signal, and one hundred and fifty boats, containing five thousand men (the Forty-second in the centre), pulled straight for the low sandy shore. We were received with a heavy fire, that sank several boats, from the batteries in front, the castle of Aboukir on the flank, and the musketry of two thousand five hundred Frenchmen. The Forty-second, Fortieth, Twenty-eighth and Twenty-third regiments soon got under shelter of the batteries, and charging up the sandhills, drove back the enemy's foot and horse, the Highlanders losing thirty-one killed, and one hundred and forty rank and file wounded. On the 12th we advanced to Mandora Tower, through palm and date woods, drove the French from a range of heights, and pushed on nearer Alexandria. The Forty-second, with the reserve under Major-General Moore, were posted on high ground near the ruins of an old Egyptian palace, which the Fifty-eighth occupied. A sand plain spread in front, the canal of Alexandria and the lake of Aboukir were on the left. The French occupied a ridge of parallel hills behind them. For seven days the armies remained quiet. At three A.M., on the 21st of March, loud shouts were heard, our pickets were driven in, and the trampling of a great multitude announced Menou's attack. In an instant, the redoubt near the ruins, and the Highlanders' position, were impetuously attacked, and while the front was tested with steel and fire, a column of Frenchmen stole in the dark between the Highlanders' left and right wing. The Forty-second instantly attacked it front and rear, and drove the enemy into the ruins. The French fought till they had lost six hundred and fifty men, when the two hundred and fifty survivors threw down their arms and surrendered their standard and guns to Major Stirling, of the Forty-

second. The enemy now pressing on in great force, Abercromby called out :

"My brave Highlanders, remember your country, remember your forefathers!" and the men rushed to the attack, not seeing that three squadrons of French cavalry were preparing to charge through the retreating infantry. General Moore gave the order to retire and form again near the redoubt, but only a few of the companies heard the order. The Highlanders were broken; down came the cavalry eager for butchery; enemies were on the flank and in the rear; yet every man stood firm, and though the Forty-second was, as it were, ridden down by cavalry, only thirteen men were wounded by French sabres. The companies stood solid and drove back the horsemen; the rest of the cavalry, passing through the openings, wheeled to the left, where the Twenty-eighth poured on them a fire that killed or disabled all that were not taken. In all these attacks the Highlanders first shot the horses before they got within sword's length, then bayoneted the riders before they could get disentangled. Furious at this repulse of the élite of his cavalry, Menou launched forth his infantry, supported by cavalry, and they, too, were driven back. A third torrent of cavalry followed, and the advance of Brigadier Stuart's brigade alone saved the brave Highlanders from annihilation.

For their share in winning this victory the Forty-second were rewarded by being allowed to bear the word "Egypt" on their colours, and the sphynx which still adorns their bonnets.

In Spain the Forty-second again showed their mettle, and their trusty bayonets were seldom far from the thickest of the fight. In that disastrous winter march to Corunna—two hundred and fifty miles of snowy mountains—the men who had learned of old how to breast a brae and ford a river, bore the fatigues better than any. They seem to have been able foragers; and, indeed, it was bitter hard for men to march and fight all day, and then bivouac at night, weak and starving, in a country that was supposed to be friendly.

The author of a Personal Narrative of a Private Soldier, who served in the Forty-second Highlanders, says, in talking of the retreat :

"Some of our good Highlanders went out to forage. No men in the army were their match in this midnight duty; they were perfect catarans; if they came to a farmhouse and wanted a hen or two, they would

merely apply a brimstone match to its beak. The poor hen gave one sneeze and dropped down lifeless! No roost was safe, if there was no dog to give the alarm. The foragers belonged to my mess, and did not like to see their officers eating potatoes. 'By the cross, they'll have potatoes and point, if there be aught in the land,' said a trusty Argyllshire man; and he was as good as his word. The foragers often returned with a sheep and a kid, and their plaids full of Irish fruit."

At the battle of Corunna hunger made the Forty-second peculiarly savage. Fourteen thousand five hundred English had to drive back twenty thousand French, who were eager to snap them up before they could embark. The Forty-second was sent to meet the French column breaking through Elorna, and trying to turn the right of Baird's division. The ground was rocky, full of ditches, and intersected by stone walls and hollow roads. Sir John Moore came up to the Forty-second, and said :

"There is no use in making a long speech, but, Forty-second, I hope you will do as you have done before."

The Highlanders lay down at the back of the height, and when the French were within a few yards, sprang up, delivered a terrific volley, and then gave them the bayonet.

"The French came up the hill cheering," says a Highland soldier who was present, "as if there were none to oppose them, we being out of their sight. When they came up to the top of the hill, all the word of command that was given was—'Forty-second, charge.' In one moment every man was up with a cheer, and every shot did execution. They were so close upon us that we gave them the bayonet the instant we fired. The confusion that now ensued baffles all the powers of memory or imagination—pell-mell, ding-dong, ilka man got his birdie, many of us skivered pairs, front and rear rank; to the right about they went, and we after them. I think I see the grisly fellows now, running and jumping, as the Highlanders, laughing and swearing, stuck the pointed steel into their loins. We followed them down to the valley, and stopped not for general or commanding officer; but still on, in the rage and wrath of the Highlanders. When we had driven them in upon their other columns, we ourselves retreated, but were not pursued, and took the advantage of a ditch that was in the valley, from which

we kept up a constant fire on the enemy till dark. . . . All the time I was in that ditch I was standing up to the knee in mud. I had a narrow escape here; it was within a hair's-breadth. In assisting a man that was wounded to the top of the ditch, we were no sooner upon it than a shower of grape-shot was poured upon us, which killed the wounded man and another comrade, who was helping him up. As we pursued them down the hill there was a poor Frenchman sorely wounded, and on his knees, his hands uplifted, and pleading for quarter. My next man, a robust Highlander, in his rage exclaimed, 'You tamt Bonaparte man. She'll run her through.' With a sudden jerk of my musket, I threw his on his shoulder, and the poor fellow's life was saved. We were in full speed after his comrades, and far past him, before my countryman brought his piece to the charge again. The Highlander thanked me many a time afterwards, and used to add, 'The deed would have been done but for you, John, I was in such a rage at the time.'"

About this time Baird was wounded and Sir John Moore fell, but the victory was with the English, and the embarkation was secured. In Lieutenant-General Hope's general orders, the Forty-second were allowed to have sustained the weight of the attack.

But though foremost on the rocks of Busaco, staunch at Fuentes, gallant at the storm of Burgos, terrible at Nivelle, and irresistible at Orthes, there was nowhere, except Quatre Bras, where the Forty-second won so much honour as at the battle of Toulouse. The Forty-second and two other regiments had to carry a chain of redoubts, which Soult was resolute to hold. As they halted in view of the enemy's position, Wellington rode by at a hard trot. "There goes Wellington," cried the soldiers; "look out, my lads, we shall have some hot work presently." "Darkening the whole hill, flanked by clouds of cavalry, and covered by the fire of their redoubts, the enemy came down upon us like a torrent. Their generals and field officers rode in front, and waved their hats amidst shouts resembling the roar of an ocean. Our Highlanders, as if actuated by one instinctive impulse, took off their bonnets too, and, waving them in the air, returned their greeting with three cheers!" There was a death-like silence for a few minutes; the enemy paused; the Forty-second then fired and brought down some officers of distinction. The French returning a volley, ad-

vanced amid a deafening roar of musketry and artillery. The Highlanders returned the fire only once, advanced up the hill, and met the enemy at the charge. The French fell back, and the first redoubt of the five was taken. Under cover of a bank the division remained, till Major-General Pack rode up and addressed the brigade. He had obtained General Clinton's permission, and cried:

"In the charge which we are now to make upon the enemy's redoubt, the Forty-second Regiment will have the honour of leading on the attack. The Forty-second will advance!"

The redoubts were three hundred yards distant over ploughed fields. The grenadiers of the Forty-second led the way; but no sooner did their black plumes appear over the banks, than a tremendous fire opened on them from the redoubts. The right wing hastily forming into line, without waiting for the left, which was ascending by companies from a hollow way, rushed on the batteries through a deadly storm of grape-shot. Just as the redoubt was reached, the French fled, leaving their last stronghold in our hands; but of the five hundred Highlanders of the morning, scarcely ninety entered the city of Toulouse.

"Amidst the clouds of smoke in which they were curtailed," says Malcolm of the Forty-second, an eye-witness, "the whole line of redoubts would every now and then start into view amidst the wild and frightful blaze, then vanish again into utter darkness. Our men were mown down by sections. I saw six of the company to which I belonged fall together, as if swept away by the discharge of one gun, and the whole ground over which we rushed was covered with the dead."

When Napoleon broke from Elba, the Forty-second was one of the first regiments called to the field. On the alarm in Brussels on the night of June the 15th, the Highlanders were the first to muster to the scream of the well-known wild pibroch, and they marched at four A.M. through Soignies forest to defend Quatre Bras from Ney's attack.

The regiment had been very popular in Brussels. "At Brussels," says Simpson, in his Visit to Flanders, "and wherever I went in the Netherlands, whenever the English troops were mentioned, the natives always returned to the Scotch, with 'Mais les Ecossais; they are good and kind, as well as brave; they are the only soldiers who become enfans de la famille in the houses in which they are billeted; they

will carry the children, and do the domestic work.' The favourite proverbial form of compliment was 'Les Ecossais sont lions dans la bataille, et agneaux dans la maison'—lions in the field, and lambs in the house. There was a competition amongst the inhabitants who should have them in their houses; and when they returned wounded, the same house they had left had its doors open, and the family went out some miles to meet 'Notre Ecossais,' our own Scotchman. The people had many instances to relate of the generosity of these men."

At Quatre Bras, the Forty-second fell into a terrible trap, but extricated themselves from it by the same self-reliance and indomitable courage they had shown in Egypt. They had been posted on a slope in line close upon the left of a road along which the Death's Head Brunswickers had just dashed, and were advancing through a field of rye that came nearly up to their shoulders. At that moment a body of French lancers bore down upon them, and were taken at first for Prussians or Belgians. The older soldiers, however, alive to danger, commenced a scattered oblique fire on the spearmen, which Sir Dennis Pack and the Forty-second officers endeavoured to restrain. Suddenly the lancers wheeled sharply round, and advanced in admirable order directly on the rear of the Forty-second and Forty-fourth (part of Picton's division). The Forty-second, now conscious of danger, ran at once into a square; but before the flank companies could run in and kneel, and form the rear face, the cruel lances were upon them. The men who could not get into the square, stood back to back, and fought with the bayonet in spite of the French officers' cries of "Why don't you surrender? Down with your arms. You see you are beaten." At the first shock of the lancers, the leading division penetrated the square, wounding and carrying with them many men of the two companies, and creating a temporary confusion. But Highland soldiers are cool as they are brave; the lancers inside the square, already sure of victory, were hemmed in, bayoneted, or captured. The endangered face of the square filled up into a living wall, and the square was never again broken in spite of charge after charge. There it stood like a tower of steel, and against it the French lances broke and splintered in vain. It was particularly noticed that in the very tumult of the charges, and amidst a galling fire, the

Highland soldiers were careful not to tread on the French wounded, who lay groaning in the centre of the square. In this fierce struggle for life, Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Robert Macrae, K.C.B., was killed by a lance thrust, which passed through his chin and up into his brain; and his adjutant escaped at the first rush of the lancers only by being fortunately thrown from his horse immediately under his men's bayonets. The regiment latterly was commanded by Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Henry Dick; he, too, severely wounded, was succeeded by Brevet-Major Davidson. When Davidson fell, "another for Hector" stepped forward, and Brevet-Major Campbell took the command. This rapid promotion all took place in a few minutes. When Captain Menzies fell, covered with wounds, his grenadiers pressed forward to save him, and there was an Homeric struggle over his body.

In one of these onslaughts, says Quartermaster-sergeant Anton, six privates fell into the enemy's hands. Among these was a little lad (Smith Fyfe) about five feet high. The French general, on seeing this diminutive-looking lad, is said to have lifted him up by the collar or breech, and exclaimed to the soldiers who were near him: "Behold the sample of the men of whom you seem afraid!" This lad returned a few days afterwards, dressed in the clothing of a French grenadier, and was saluted by the name of Napoleon, which he retained until he was discharged.

A Scotch regiment was for a considerable time unemployed by any French column, though exposed to a fire of round-shot. The officers, who had a complete view of the field, saw the Forty-second and other battalions warmly engaged in charging, and the young men could not brook the contrast presented by their inactivity. "It will," said they, "be the same now as it always has been. The Forty-second will have all the luck of it. There will be a fine noise in the newspapers about that regiment, but devil the word of us." Some of their elders consoled them by assuring them of the probability that, before the day was over, "they would have quite enough of it."

The Forty-second was several times during the day thrown into squares to repel charges of cuirassiers. Before their dreadful volleys these men, clad in steel, dropped fast from their saddles, and eye-witnesses describe the clash of the armour,

the curses of the assailants, the screams of the dying, the neighing of the horses, and the blaze and crackle of the musketry, as forming a terrible combination of horrors.

At Waterloo, too, the Forty-second fought with great stubbornness, and it was through their opened ranks that the Scots Greys made their tremendous and overwhelming charge; and when the Greys returned victorious the Highlanders received them with yells of, "Glory of Scotland!" The Forty-second lost three officers, two sergeants, and forty-five rank and file; while twelve sergeants, two drummers, and two hundred and fifteen rank and file were wounded. For their bravery on this day the Forty-second was allowed to blazon the word "Waterloo" on their colours, a medal was conferred on every officer and soldier, and the privilege of reckoning two years' service towards additional pay and pension on discharge was granted to the men.

Of the regiment's late exploits we have no room here to speak. Let us trust that the Forty-second may ever remain as perfect as at present, from the "sphinx to the buckle," and may the motto of their banner, "Nemo me impune lacessit," be as grimly true in the future as it was in days of yore.

MODERN ROMAN MOSAICS.

FROM A BALCONY ON THE CORSO.

TAKE a long, rather narrow, street of tall houses, with all the many windows and balconies of all their many stories crowded with heads, and hung with coloured draperies, mostly red; strew the horse road with bright yellow sand; stretch a blue, cloud-speckled sky overhead, pouring down the intense light of an Italian spring afternoon; endow all the grotesque figures of men and women in Mr. Cremer's toy-shop with life; add to them a large throng of mortals clad in the ordinary cosmopolitan costume of to-day; provide yourself, moreover, with hundreds of vehicles of every conceivable shape and pattern; from the elegant landau, to the rickety one-pony gig; from the top-heavy construction on wheels representing a Swiss chalet, or a ship full rigged, to the hired fiacre, covered, horses and all, with sheets of white and coloured calico; send the whole mass pell-mell to perambulate the long street from end to end in two files, at such a quicker or slower pace as the

varying density of the crowd necessitates; cause a mingled roar to arise into the air, comparable to nothing I have heard, save the indescribable noise made by a London mob at the gallery door of a theatre on boxing-night; rain upon this crowd from every window and coigne of 'vantage a furious shower of small plaster-of-paris pellets; bags full of common flour, a few bouquets, and lumps of coloured chalk, styled by courtesy "sweetmeats;" do all this, and you will have the main ingredients for a Carnival Corso on Shrove Tuesday in Rome.

It is a strange spectacle. It has been described many times, well, ill, and indifferently; but every genuine experience has some value, if genuinely narrated, and I paint my picture at least sincerely, giving every tint and outline as I saw them, and not as I was told beforehand I should see them.

Well, here we are in a balcony near the centre of the long street called the Corso (so named from the fact of the main carnival procession, or "corso," passing through it), excellently placed for seeing and hearing. Our view is bounded in one direction by the Piazza del Popolo, where are wooden barriers erected for the race of the "barberi," which is to come off by-and-bye, and in the other, by the Piazza di Venezia. It is about four o'clock of the afternoon, and the "fun" is at its height. On our way to the house of the Roman marchesa, whose hospitable balcony received us on this occasion, we have already encountered several agreeable adventures of a carnivalesque quality. My hat and coat have been thickly powdered with flour, aimed with exquisite felicity from the windows above. A lady of the party has received full on her cheek a smart blow, from a handful of flour and confetti delivered at short range from the hand of a playful mask. A hailstorm of plaster-of-paris pellets rattled on heads and shoulders the whole way until we gained the sheltering passage we were in search of, and presented ourselves in our hostess's salon with as much grace as our dusty-millerish attire and battered head-gear permitted.

That was, as it were, the prologue and preliminary to the full enjoyment of Shrove Tuesday's Corso. They are so gay, these southern people! I think, however, that with an unlimited supply of chalk and flour, I could undertake to make Little Pedlington equally "gay," even although its inhabitants be but morose islanders, victims (as

all the world knows) to the spleen, and accustomed (who shall gainsay it?) to hang themselves on the smallest provocation. But then—Little Pedlington would probably get drunk. Aye, there's the rub! Now these Roman merry-makers are sober, in the technical sense, every man of them, quite guiltless of any suspicion of a drop too much, and therefore not absolutely dangerous to life and limb. True, our friend the marchesa had her mouth disfigured by a swollen bruise, the result of a little too energetically flung volley of comfits aimed at her on the day before. It had drawn blood, she told us, "but very little"—and surely it is worth while to endure a cut lip for the sake of the brilliant pleasures of the Carnival Corso. Many, perhaps most, of the lookers-on at the windows and balconies wear little wire masks. Armed with this trifling precaution, one may enjoy all the "gaiety," and be unconstrainedly "gay" oneself.

Hooked on to the iron railing of the balcony in front of us is a long, narrow, wooden trough filled with confetti (the plaster-of-paris pellets aforesaid), and provided with long-handled scoops, wherewith to project the missiles as far as possible. Confetti rain down on us from the windows above. Confetti shoot up at us, and with considerable force, from the windows below. Confetti come flying obliquely at us from the windows on the right and the left. Every now and then a soft shower of meal descends, and powders still more thickly our already whitened coats.

Down in the street there the pavement is covered with a thick paste of confetti, trodden into that consistency by thousands of passing footsteps. Bunches of flowers fly across the Corso from balcony to balcony, and are received with a smile and a bow, or, missing their goal, fall, and become a prey to the street boys, who scramble and claw each other for them on their knees, among the horses' feet, and in the dirty white dust. Every human being who passes is powdered like a miller from head to foot. A brisk fire of confetti is kept up from the carriages as well as from the balconies and windows. Look up the street, or down the street, and you will see a constant succession of what look at a distance like tiny white clouds, or puffs of steam from a locomotive, flying backward and forward, from one side of the Corso to the other, swift as a weaver's shuttle.

Now passes a car full of masks, all dressed alike in fawn-coloured dominos

with green facings, and all energetically ladling out confetti from great baskets which stand before them. Anon comes a company of scarlet dominos, with black masks and horns, whom of course you at once perceive to be demons. There goes a ship, creaking and reeling on four wheels, and manned by a crew the like of which was never seen out of a Christmas pantomime. This nautical party is closely followed by a bizarre equipage consisting of an ancient hackney-coach past work—can the reader conceive the point of dilapidation which a foreign hack vehicle must have reached before it is finally withdrawn from active service?—and drawn by three donkeys, the foremost of which is ridden by a postilion rigged out something after the fashion of the quack doctor of the Italian stage, with embroidered coat, knee breeches, a wig made of tow, and a huge shirt-frill sticking out of his waistcoat. Two masks in blue calico dominos occupy the carriage, and the poor little donkeys seem to have plucked up a spirit for the occasion, and go along at a brisk trot. Then comes a party of ancient Roman warriors, with crimson draperies, short swords, and helmets, all complete. These worthies are seated very much at their ease in a two-horse fiacre, lined for the nonce with white cotton stuff, and are driven by a modern Roman, whose shabby coat and trousers, and befloured "wide-awake," contrast queerly enough with the classic grandeur of his fare.

Presently, between the carriages, and clearing the crowd of pedestrians, rushes by a mascherata of seven or eight persons in pink, blue, yellow, and white dominos, with grotesque masks; leaping, running, shouting, or occasionally indulging in the peculiar discordant falsetto tone which is affected by all masks in Carnival time, and which was, of course, originally assumed to disguise the natural voice, and so avoid recognition. In their wake follows harlequin; the veritable harlequin familiar to our Christmas holidays, with many-coloured tights, white felt hat, black mask, and bat of lath. And he too leaps and runs, although, it must be owned, with a somewhat cow-like grace! There is the Neapolitan Pulcinella, the mediæval noble, the classic senator, the picturesque peasant of the Abruzzi, bears, monkeys, white dominos with the heads of geese, and several nondescript figures which, by a positive inspiration of sagacity whereon I plume myself not a little, I recognise as

being intended to represent Scottish Highlanders!

But all these motley groups—demons, sailors, warriors, senators, harlequin, Pulcinella, geese, bears, monkeys, quack doctors, and Highlanders—are alike intent upon flinging confetti at their neighbours, by the handful, by the ladleful, by the sackful. That is, apparently, the grand aim and end of the assembled multitude. The spectacle is undoubtedly bright, striking, and animated; but in order to see it with any tranquillity or enjoyment, one should be ensconced behind some species of casemate, and sheltered from the disturbing volleys of hard pellets, which rattle almost without intermission on nose, eyes, cheeks, forehead, and shoulders.

We all know the old chronicler's dictum that we English are accustomed to take our pleasures "moult tristement." Look down upon the surging crowd beneath us, and say if there be not some strain of sadness in this fashion of amusement. It is noisy enough, no doubt. But of downright enjoyment, of spontaneous fun and merriment, how much do you see? The sound that ascends to yonder brilliant sky is a mere brutal roar, devoid of all hilarity. Look at those passing faces. Do you see a smile on any one of them? I do not. I see eager, anxious, weary—in some cases wolfish—expressions, but no smile; no sunshine of the heart. In a word, the people do not look happy. Yet I doubt not that they fancy themselves to be enjoying the passing minutes to the utmost, and would scout with surprise and indignation any suggestion that the afternoon of Shrove Tuesday might possibly be spent more pleasantly than they are spending it now.

In the balconies there is more cheerfulness of expression—especially in those balconies which are protected in some measure by an awning from the showers of confetti. Here are young persons and children, mostly foreigners, to whom the Carnival Corso is novel and amusing, and for whom the ineffable magic of childhood casts a glamour of enchantment over the scene. But the native spectators, the old hands, are tired to death of the whole affair. Yet they persist in doing and saying the regulation things, with the steady and pathetic constancy of an old circus horse wearily ambling his accustomed round. Our hostess, a gracious, dark-eyed lady, whispers piteously to one of her female guests that this is the tenth day of the festivities, that she does not know how

she shall last out until the evening, being already fagged almost beyond endurance, and that she shall hail the advent of Ash Wednesday, which puts an end to Carnival gaieties, with fervent thankfulness. Nevertheless there she stands, as she has stood hour after hour, throwing and receiving showers of plaster bullets, bowing, smiling, gesticulating, and taking care that each of the visitors who throng her apartment has a place at one or other of her various windows and balconies, with a heroism worthy of a better cause. And there is tough work before her yet; for it is only five o'clock, and there are the barberi and the mocoli still to come.

The barberi are merely riderless horses which run a race, as all the world knows, from one end of the Corso to the other: from the Piazza del Popolo, that is, to the Piazza di Venezia. The poor brutes are urged on by hanging plates and spiked balls of metal suspended from their backs, so as to beat against their flanks, and by the shouts and hand-clappings of the crowd. This portion of the Carnival amusements has become well-nigh intolerable to numbers of the inhabitants of Rome. Accidents, often of a serious, sometimes of a fatal, nature, happen at nearly every race. But the basso popolo, the real populace, will not hear of the barberi being abolished, and look on them as the choicest ingredient in the festival. Only yesterday a man was knocked down by one of the terrified rushing horses, and killed on the spot.

But we must not think of such unpleasant matters now; for hark, there is the gun which gives the signal to prepare for the race, by the withdrawal of all carriages from the Corso, and at once a thrill of interest and expectation runs through the crowd. In a wonderfully short space of time the vehicles disappear. A detachment of soldiers march through the street headed by a very zealous, if not very mellifluous, military band. For a brief while the wearisome volleys of confetti cease. All heads are eagerly turned towards the Piazza del Popolo, where, in a cleared space surrounded by barricades, four or five horses presently appear. Another gun. They are off. But, good Heavens, where are the barriers to keep the crowd within bounds, and make a road for the horses? There are none. The horses seem to cleave their own course as they gallop wildly onward half maddened by fear and excitement. The swaying mass of human beings parts before them like

water before a swift prow, and closes again in their wake. In a few seconds the beasts rush by beneath our balcony, accompanied and followed by deafening shouts. In a few seconds more, it is all over. The race is run. The military band marches back up the street. The carriages reappear. This time there is nobody killed or wounded, and the corsa de' barberi has been a great success.

And now, here and there, with a fitful glimmer, sometimes high up, sometimes low down, the moccoli begin to shine. The moccoli are small wax tapers held in the hand either singly or in bunches. It is the object of every one to keep his own moccoli alight, and to extinguish the moccoli of everybody else. The rule is simple and intelligible enough.

Gradually, as the daylight wanes in the western sky, these tiny flames sparkle more numerous and brilliant on every hand. Pyramids of gas-jets are lighted in the street. From many windows coloured Bengal fires are displayed, red, green, and white. Some innovators hold out at arm's length pyrotechnic contrivances which send forth showers of sparks in a fire-fountain. The sparks fall on clothes and on heads; on wooden window-shutters, and boxes now nearly emptied of their confetti. They fall in your eyes, if you unwarily look upward unprotected by a mask. They burn holes in your coat, and in your wife's shawl. The moccoli drip hot wax, with impartial bounty, on all comers, and in all directions. But no matter! These be Carnival diversions. You must be enjoying yourself, you know! No British manners here, of taking your pleasure moult trisment. So accept the scalding wax and the fire-fountain, and reciprocate your neighbour's attentions by trying to flap out his moccoli with a rag attached to a long cane. And if you are animated, and go into the thing with spirit, you may be fortunate enough to knock his hat off, or give him a smart fillip in the eye, in the course of your efforts.

Now from windows above, and windows below, from windows to the right, and windows to the left, protrude these long, flexible canes, with a cloth firmly fixed to the ends of them. And they wave, and flap, and bang on all sides, extinguishing moccoli, and sometimes seized upon by a hand in some balcony, and forcibly detained whilst a sharp struggle goes on for possession, and the hoarse cry of "Senza moccolo! senza moccolo!"—"without a

moccolo!"—resounds in triumph or derision.

Down in the street pedestrians carry moccoli and Bengal lights. A brisk warfare goes on between them and the occupants of the carriages, each party endeavouring to blow out, or flap out, the moccoli of the other.

Looking along the tapering perspective of the Corso, the scene is certainly brilliant and fairy-like, if one were but at peace to contemplate its beauty. Hundreds, thousands of tiny tapers glitter along the line. They might be carried by elfin torch-bearers at the revels of Oberon and Titania. The double file of vehicles moves on in the gathering darkness like a procession of fantastic monsters, with great luminous eyes. There are glowing circles of ruby, amethyst, and emerald radiance mixed at intervals with the golden yellow of the other flames. The long bamboos with their cotton flags sweep hither and thither, and flap like the wings of weird flying creatures started to life from some old painted arabesque, and still the heavens grow of a darker, deeper blue. The cries, and shouts, and uncouth noises of the multitude, rise up into a sky spangled with serenely scintillating stars. They have looked down on strange sights in the Eternal City, those stars: on many "fantastic tricks" played off "before high heaven." It is wondrous to gaze upward at their ethereal brightness, from the hot glare of the last hours of Carnival, as we walk homeward.

The roar of the Corso grows fainter in the distance. There is a peaceful plash of fountains in our ears; when suddenly with a vibrating boom and jingle of tambourines, two white-robed maskers hurrying toward the scene of revelry, glide past us like the ghosts of long dead and gone Romans, and disappear mutely in the black shadow thrown by three tall columns of the Forum.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXIX. CONFUSION WORSE CONFOUNDED.

It was the irrepressible Lady Duke come off, hot foot, to begin operations, now that "the ground was cleared." She looked a little disconcerted when she saw that Mrs. Gardiner was "on the ground"

before her; and the two ladies sniffed a reciprocal hostility.

Mr. Doughty seemed overflowing with bitterness, and his eyes sparkled with eagerness.

"All my relations have been unceasing in their attendance during my illness," he said, "and I will show my gratitude to them in some way. Look at all these chests that have come down from London. They contain jewels, books, family papers, what not. They are all part of the estate, and, when I am taken away, must be distributed among my heirs. I dare say you will not have long to wait. Eh, Lady Duke, are you impatient?"

"Oh!" said that lady, shocked at the imputation, "surely you do not think so badly of me?"

"What would you have me think of all the world after the way I have been treated! There are people in this world who cannot be even bribed to come near a poor sick dying being, for fear of compromising themselves. That is a spectacle of virtue, which, I must say, none of you could have imitated. I don't want you to do so. I am going now to be generous, and to take care of my own flesh and blood. As a beginning, Lady Duke, look at that heap of torn-up papers. There is the draft of my will. But now I must take care of you all. Tell me," he said to Lady Duke, "has your son quitted England as yet?"

"No," said that lady. "I had a letter from him this morning. I believe the sailing of his vessel was postponed."

He started up.

"I knew it. It is now as clear as daylight. He did not write to you that she had gone to meet him. What an instance of an overpowering passion!"

For a moment Lady Duke was confounded by this statement. But she had penetration enough to see how the matter really stood, and, like Mrs. Gardiner, inflamed the delusion by an artful suggestion.

"I never thought of that! But no! she could not be so abandoned to all sense of propriety and decency."

"Love will do anything," he said. "What is this now?"

The servant came to say that Mr. Nagle was below. Mr. Doughty winced, and even shivered.

"Take any shape but that," he said. "No, I am hardly in the vein to receive any one bearing that name. Tell him not now. Another time. I really think the sight of

that poor musician, and the allusions he would be certain to make to his child, would really overcome my brain, which seems to me to be only just nicely balanced. Now leave me. Do."

They went away, interchanging curious looks. On the stairs they met the doctor.

"He is very odd," said Lady Duke. "He seems quite unsettled by the shock."

The doctor shook his head.

"I have been dreading this," he said. "The news should have been broken to him gently."

"Oh," said Lady Duke, in defence of her new ally, "I am sure Mrs. Gardiner took every care about that. He must have known it sooner or later."

Mrs. Gardiner gave her a grateful look, and squeezed her hand.

"I really think," continued Lady Duke, "he should not be much left alone. His manner was singularly wild. You are aware that he has torn up the will," she added, in a low voice. "Mrs. Gardiner saw him do it."

"I can swear to that," said that lady, in a low voice. "He really raved about being deserted and betrayed by that girl; and then snatched up the papers and tore them into shreds. And his words, as he did so, were—'See, this was intended for her. But I'll be a fool no longer.' And I can assure you that he looked and spoke like a maniac as he did so."

The three conspirators gazed at each other with a curious meaning in their face.

"Do you think, Doctor Spooner," asked Lady Duke, hesitatingly, "a crisis like this is likely to make him worse, or would it expend itself, and wear out?"

"From morbidly dwelling on it, he will grow worse," said the doctor. "I should not be at all surprised if, after to-night, we shall see a most singular change in him. I begin to fear so."

The conspirators were thus whispering with heads bent close together, when a voice came from below stairs which made them start.

"I say, Spooner, are you coming down? Am I to be kept here all day?"

It was Mr. Nagle.

"This man here again," said Lady Duke. "What effrontery!"

"The coolest piece of assurance!" said Mrs. Gardiner.

"Well, after all," said the doctor, "we must make some allowance; he is not so much to blame. I'll speak to him. I know

how to manage him. May I ask you to go away now."

The two ladies looked at him suspiciously. In these exciting times every one was suspicious; and the most indifferent action might assume the most varied complexion according to the suspicions of the lookers on.

"Yes, go away," said the doctor, impatiently.

They descended, and passed Mr. Nagle with a haughty bow. That gentleman had lost all restraint, and was really desperate.

"Fine work this," he said. "I know the game that is hatching up-stairs. But I'll be a witness against the whole pack. Don't think I've been hoodwinked all this time. Don't think that I can't see what's plotting."

"Sir!" said the two ladies.

"If there's law in the land I'll not see my child schemed and humbugged out of her rights. There's a will made and executed securing 'em to her; and if that's not forthcoming at the proper time, I'll have the law. Ah! you thought you had got rid of us!"

The ladies gave him a haughty look of contempt, and swept away past him. The Nagle-Gardiner alliance was thus dissolved almost as suddenly as it was formed, and a new one, the Duke-Gardiner, constituted. As soon as the door was closed upon them the doctor took Mr. Nagle mysteriously aside.

"He does not want to see you," he said. "He said so a moment ago."

"I don't believe it," said the musician.

"Polite! You can go up if you will. Only, I entreat you, be moderate in your behaviour. He said himself," added the doctor, with meaning, "before three witnesses, that the sight of any one bearing your name would upset his brain."

The music-master stared wildly. It had begun to force itself on his rather narrow faculties, that a mysterious chain of events was being woven around him, and that skilful hands were raising up impenetrable barriers between him and the object of his hopes. For the first time he began to feel that he was rather a helpless creature.

Somewhat cowed, he answered: "Of course I should not like to have any bad effect upon him; but it is very hard that I should be shut out in this way. I, in whose favour—or at least in that of my child, but it's all the same thing, you know—a will has been executed. She's his heiress,

and in her absence I'm duly constituted trustee, or as good."

"I am sorry to dash your hopes," was the answer; "but it's my duty to tell you that the document has been destroyed, and in presence of Mrs. Gardiner. If you go up and see him he will probably tell you of the circumstance."

The unfortunate Nagle was almost struck down by this news, and remained staring stupidly at his informant.

At last he recovered himself. "I had better see him," he said, quietly. "There can't be such villany in the world. I'll make no noise, I give you my word of honour."

"To be sure," cried the doctor, "nothing more reasonable. By all means, go up. But recollect his mind is in that state of balance that the slightest excitement will upset it. Now go up."

Awe-stricken and crushed, Mr. Nagle went up and tapped softly at the door. A wild face was put forth.

"You there!" cried Mr. Doughty. "Why not bring your cruel, heartless daughter? She has pierced me to the heart—she has killed me. What do you want?"

"Just to see you," said Mr. Nagle, collecting himself for a desperate effort. "And I may only have this opportunity, for there is such a gang about the house that soon no one will have access to you at all."

"What, you mean my relatives? But, as I said, what do you want—money? Not a halfpenny. I intend to give it all to charity, to build an hospital for the Incurables. 'I shall die and endow a college or a cat.'"

Mr. Nagle started at this expression, which he had never heard before, and which he assumed to be the coinage of his friend's brain.

"A cat," he repeated, "endow a cat! My goodness! what a singular idea."

"Yes," repeated the other, "a whole community of cats, sooner than a shilling should come to those who have broken my heart. As for the will," went on Mr. Doughty; "there are the fragments. Your daughter has lost a fortune, but she has shown a splendid example of Spartan self-denial. All at my expense, though. God forgive her for it. She has dealt with me cruelly—cruelly——"

"No, no," said the other, deprecatingly. "She will come back, I know she will."

"Let her do what she please—I do not care to hear of her now. Never breathe her name to me. I suppose you fancy that

I shall in time become again the soft, foolish dupe I have been, and lavish everything on her and the lover for whom she has sacrificed me."

"Who do you mean?" asked Mr. Nagle, quite bewildered. "I vow and protest——"

"No, of course, you know nothing. Not that she has gone after her idol—that his departure for India was all a delusion. She loved him from the beginning, has that girl of yours—loved him all this time—loves him now. She is with him."

"Good Heavens!" said the stupefied Nagle.

"Oh, you are beginning to see it, now. It is quite intelligible. I suppose she thought she would be forced into a hated marriage with her elderly and infatuated admirer. She need not have been afraid. From this hour I have done with her. And I have done with you all. Let me never see you again. It was an unlucky day that I first laid eyes on you."

Mr. Nagle's voice, spirit, power of action, were so taken away by these words, that he suffered himself to be driven out from the fortress on which his eyes had so long and so fondly reposed. He felt that all was over, and, with some mortification, that all through this episode he had merely figured as the obscure pawn of the game.

He retired with much consternation, and, to say the truth, was not so much overwhelmed by the complete overthrow of all his hopes, as by the singular change that had come over his late friend and patron.

"He never talked and rambled in that style before," he said to himself. "And what did he mean by talking of leaving the property to cats? Heaven help us all! Corinna can't have upset his wits?"

Doctor Spooner showed him out.

"I hope everything went on satisfactorily? You attended to my warning, I hope, and did not excite him?"

"Excite him! He was excited enough before I came in. Why, what can be over him?"

"What did he say?"

"Why, threatening every one all round; my girl Corinna, too. He has warned me not to come near him. Talks of leaving all his money to found an hospital for cats. He must be raving."

"This is very strange," said the doctor. "Are you sure of what you heard? I must own, at the same time, that his manner to the two ladies who have just left, suggested the same idea. They made almost the same remark. Founding an institution for cats, you are sure, were the words?"

"I'll take my affidavit to it," said Mr. Nagle, with importance.

"Oh! if so, then you will not be likely to let the recollection slip out of your mind. It shows great sagacity in you to have noticed what might have properly occurred to a physician. Good-bye."

Rather pleased at this compliment, Mr. Nagle went his way. The sense of being the depository of such valuable information, and the longing to find people to whom he could impart his griefs, his sense of cruel desertion, and a wish to prove that he was in communication with his late patron, made him varnish up the important fact he had communicated to Mr. Spooner.

Before evening every one was talking of the piteous condition of poor Old Doughty, shaking their heads half dismally, half enjoyingly, over the sudden upset of his wits. The unfortunate speech reported by Mr. Nagle was repeated with infinite zest. An infirmary for sick cats was a notion the most nicely fitted in the world to produce the impression desired; hours of description could not have done nearly so much. Mr. Nagle was led on by his vanity to repeat it to innumerable persons.

The question was then asked, "Who were his next of kin?" Whose duty was it to move in the matter? Somebody should surely take the matter up, and look after the poor creature whose wits had been upset by sickness, and the cruel shock he had received. This was an exciting topic enough for Brickford.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 228. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER LVIII. DANGER.

SIR HARRY took his coffee with us, and read to me a little now and then from the papers which had come by the late mails. Mr. Blount had farming news to tell Richard. It was a dreadful tea-party.

I was only able that night to appoint with Richard to meet me, next day, at our accustomed trysting place.

Three o'clock was our hour of meeting. The stupid, feverish day dragged on, and the time at length arrived. I got on my things quickly, and trembling lest I should be joined by Sir Harry or Mr. Blount, I betook myself through the orchard, and by the wicket in the hedge, to the lonely path through the thick woods where we had a few months since plighted our troth.

Richard appeared very soon; he was approaching by the path opposite to that by which I had come.

The foliage was thick and the boughs hang low in that place. You could have fancied him a figure walking in the narrow passage of a monastery, so dark and well-defined is the natural roofing of the pathway there. He raised his open hand, and shook his head as he drew near; he was not smiling; he looked very sombre.

He glanced back over his shoulder, and looked sharply down the path I had come by, and being now very near me, with another gloomy shake of the head, he said, with a tone and look of indescribable reproach and sorrow: "So, Ethel has her secrets, and tells me but half her mind."

"What can you mean, Richard?"

"Ah! Ethel, I would not have treated you so," he continued.

"You distract me, Richard; what have I done?"

"I have heard it all by accident, I may say, from old Mr. Blount, who has been simpleton enough to tell me. You have asked my uncle to take you to London, and you are going."

"Asked him! I have all but implored of him to leave me here. I never heard a word of it till last night, as we returned together in the boat. Oh! Richard, how could you think such things? That is the very thing I have been so longing to talk to you about."

"Ethel, darling, are you opening your heart entirely to me, now; is there no reserve? No; I am sure there is not; you need not answer."

"It is distracting news; is there nothing we can do to prevent it?" I said.

He looked miserable enough, as walking slowly along the path, and sometimes standing still, we talked it over.

"Yes," he said; "the danger is that you may lead him by resistance to look for some secret motive. If he should suspect our engagement, few worse misfortunes could befall us. Good heavens! shall I ever have a quiet home? Ethel, I know what will happen; you will go to London; I shall be forgotten. It will end in the ruin of all my hopes." So he raved on.

I wept, and upbraided, and vowed my old vows over again.

At length after this tempestuous scene had gone on for some time, we two walking side by side up and down the path, and sometimes stopping short, I crying, if you will, like a fool, he took my hand and looked in my face very sadly, and he said after a little:

"Only I know that he would show more anger, I should have thought that my uncle

knew of our engagement, and was acting expressly to frustrate it. He has found work for me at his property near Hull, and from that I am to go to Warwickshire, so that I suppose I can't be here again before the middle of October, and long before then you will be at Brighton, where, Mr. Blount says, he means to take you first, and from that to London."

"But you are not to leave this immediately?" I said.

He smiled bitterly, and answered:

"He takes good care I shall. I am to leave this to-morrow morning."

I could not speak for a moment.

"Oh, Richard, Richard, how am I to live through this separation?" I cried wildly. "You must contrive some way to see me. I shall die unless you do."

"Come, Ethel, let us think it over; it seems to me, we have nothing for it for the present but submission. I am perfectly certain that our attachment is not suspected. If it were, far more cruel and effectual measures would be taken. We must, therefore, be cautious. Let us betray nothing of our feelings. You shall see me undergo the ordeal with the appearance of carelessness and even cheerfulness, although my heart be bursting. You, darling, must do the same; one way or other I will manage to see you sometimes, and to correspond regularly. We are bound each to the other by promises we dare not break, and when I desert you, may God desert me! Ethel, will you say the same?"

"Yes, Richard," I repeated, vehemently, through sobs, "when I forsake you may God forsake me! You know I could not live without you. Oh! Richard, darling, how shall I see you all this evening, knowing it to be the last? How can I look at you, or hear your voice, and yet no sign, and talk or listen just as usual as if nothing had gone wrong? Richard, is there no way to escape? Do you think if we told your uncle? Might it not be the best thing after all? Could it possibly make matters worse?"

"Yes it would, a great deal worse; that is not to be thought of," said Richard, with a thoughtful frown; "I know him better than you do. No; we have nothing for it but patience, and entire trust in one another. As for me, if I am away from you, the more solitary I am, the more bearable my lot. With you it will be different; you will soon be in the stream and whirl of your old life. I shall lose you, Ethel." He stamped on the ground, and struck his

forehead with his open hand in sheer distraction. "As for me, I can enjoy nothing without you; I may have been violent, wicked, reckless, what you will; but selfish or fickle, no one ever called me."

I was interrupting him all the time with my passionate vows of fidelity, which he seemed hardly to hear; he was absorbed in his own thoughts. After a silence of a minute or two, he said, suddenly:

"Look here, Ethel; if you don't like your London life, you can't be as well there as here, and you can, if you will, satisfy my uncle that you are better, as well as happier, here at Golden Friars. You can do that, and that is the way to end it—the only way to end it, that I see. You can write to me, Ethel, without danger. You will, I know, every day, just a line; and when you tell me how to address mine, you shall have an answer by every post. Don't go out in London, Ethel; you must promise that."

I did, vehemently and reproachfully. I wondered how he could suspect me of wishing to go out. But I could not resent the jealousy that proved his love.

It was, I think, just at this moment that I heard a sound that made my heart bound within me, and then sink with terror. It was the clear, deep voice of Sir Harry, so near that it seemed a step must bring him round the turn in the path, and full in view of us.

"Go, darling, quickly," said Richard, pressing me gently with one hand, and with the other pointing in the direction furthest from the voice that was so near a signal of danger. He himself turned, and walked quickly to meet Sir Harry, who was conferring with his ranger about thinning the timber.

I was out of sight in a moment, and, in agitation indescribable, made my way home.

CHAPTER LIX. AN INTRUDER.

It was all true. Richard left Dorracleugh early next morning. Those who have experienced such a separation know its bitterness, and the heartache and apathy that follow.

I was going to be left quite alone, and mistress of Dorracleugh for three weeks at least; perhaps for twice as long. Mr. Blount was to leave next day for France to pay a visit of a fortnight to Vichy. Sir Harry Rokestone, a few days later, was to leave Dorracleugh for Brighton.

Nothing could be kinder than Sir Harry. It was plain that he suspected nothing of the real situation.

"You'll be missing your hit of back-

gammon with Lemuel Blount," he said, "and your sail on the mere wi' myself, and our talk round the tea-table of an evening. 'Twill be dowlly down here, lass; but ye'll be coming soon where you'll see sights and hear noise enough for a dozen. So think o' that, and when we are gone you munnon be glumpin' about the house, but chirp up, and think there are but a few weeks between you and Brighton and Luanon."

How directly this kind of consolation went to the source of my dejection you may suppose.

So the time came, and I was alone. Solitude was a relief. I could sit looking at the lake, watching the track where his boat used to come and go over the water, and thinking of him half the day. I could walk in the pathway, and sit under the old beech-tree, and murmur long talks with him in fancy, without fear of interruption; but oh! the misgivings, the suspense, the dull, endless pain of separation!

Not a line reached me from Richard. He insisted that while I remained at Dorraclough there should be no correspondence. In Golden Friars, and about the post-office, there were so many acute ears and curious eyes.

Sir Harry had been gone about three weeks, when he sent me a really exquisite little enamelled watch, set in brilliants; it was brought to Dorraclough by a Golden Friars neighbour whom he had met in his travels. Then, after a silence of a week, another letter came from Sir Harry. He was going up to London, he said, to see after the house, and to be sure that nothing was wanting to "make it smart."

Then some more days of silence followed, interrupted very oddly.

I was out, taking my lonely walk in the afternoon, when a chaise with a port-manteau, a hat-box, and some other luggage on top, drove up to the hall-door; the driver knocked and rang, and out jumped Richard Marston, who ran up the steps, and asked the servant, with an accustomed air of command, to take his luggage up to his room.

He had been some minutes in the hall before he inquired whether I was in the house.

He sat down on a hall-chair, in his hat and great-coat, just as he had come out of the chaise, lost in deep thought.

He seemed for a time undecided where to go; he went to the foot of the stairs, and stopped short, with his hand on the banister, and turned back; then he stood for a little while in the middle of the hall, looking down on his dusty boots, again in

deep thought; then he walked to the hall-door, and stood on the steps, in the same undecided state, and sauntered in again, and said to the servant:

"And Miss Ware, you say, is out walking? Well, go you and tell the housekeeper that I have come, and shall be coming and going for a few days, till I hear from London."

The man departed to execute his message. Richard Marston had paid the vicar a visit of about five minutes, as he drove through the town of Golden Friars, and had had a very private and earnest talk with him.

He seemed very uncomfortable and fidgety. He took off his hat and laid it down, and put it on again, and looked dark and agitated, like a man in sudden danger, who expects a struggle for his life.

He went again to the foot of the stairs, and listened for a few seconds; and then, without more ado, he walked over and turned the key that was in Sir Harry's study-door, took it out, and went into the room, looking very stern and nervous.

In a little more than five minutes Mrs. Shackleton, the housekeeper, in her thick brown silk, knocked sharply at the door.

"Come in," called Richard Marston's voice.

"I can't, sir."

"Can't? Why? What's the matter?"

"You've bolted it, please, on the inside," she answered, very tartly.

"I? I haven't bolted it," Richard Marston answered, with a quiet laugh. "Try again."

She did, a little fiercely; but the door opened, and disclosed Richard Marston sitting in his uncle's easy-chair, with one of the newspapers he had bought in his railway carriage expanded on his knees.

He looked up carelessly.

"Well, Mrs. Shackleton, what's the row?"

"No row, sir, please," she answered, as sharply rustling into the room, and looking round. She didn't like him. "But the door was bolted, I assure you, sir, only a minute before, when I tried it first; and my master, Sir Harry, told me no one was to be allowed into this room while he's away."

"So I should have thought; his letters lying about; but I found the door open, and the key in the lock; here it is; so I thought it safer to take it out."

The old woman made a short curtsy as she took it, dryly, from his fingers; and she stood, resolutely waiting.

"Oh! I suppose," he said, starting up, and stretching himself, with a smile and a little yawn, "you want to turn me out?"

"Yes, sir, please," said Mrs. Shackleton, peremptorily.

The young gentleman cast a careless look through the far window, and looked lazily round, as if to see that he had not forgotten anything, and then said, with a smile:

"Mrs. Shackleton, happy the man who has such a lady to take care of his worldly goods."

"I'm no lady, sir; I'm not above my business," she said, with another hard little curtsy. "I tries to do my dooty accordin' to my conscience. Sorry to have to disturb you, sir."

"Not the least; no disturbance," he said, sauntering out of the room, with another yawn.

He was cudgelling his brain to think what civility he could do the old lady, or how he could please or make her friendly; but Mrs. Shackleton had her northern pride, he knew, which was easily ruffled, and he must approach her very cautiously.

CHAPTER LX. SIR HARRY'S KEY.

Up to his room he went; his things were all there; he wished to get rid of the dust and smuts of his railway journey.

He made his toilet rapidly; and just as he was about to open his door a knock came to it.

"What is it?" he asked.

"The vicar has called, sir, and wants to know if you can see him."

"Certainly. Tell him I'll go down in a moment."

Mr. Marston had foreseen this pursuit with a prescience of which he was proud. He went down-stairs, and found the white-haired vicar alone in the drawing-room.

"I am so delighted you have come," said Richard Marston, advancing quickly, with an outstretched hand, from the door, without giving him a moment to begin. "I have only had time to dress since I arrived, and I have made up my mind that it is better to replace this key in your hand, without using it; and, in the mean time, it is better in your keeping than in mine. Don't you think so?"

"Well, sir," said the good vicar, "I do. It is odd, but the very same train of thought passed through my mind, and, in fact, induced me to pay you this visit. You see it was placed in my charge, and I think until it is formally required of me, I should not part with it."

"Just so," acquiesced the young man.

"We both acted, perhaps, a little too precipitately."

"So we did, sir," said Richard Marston, "but I take the entire blame on myself. I'm too apt to be impulsive and foolish. I generally think too late; happily this time, however, I did reflect, and with your concurrence, I am now sure I was right."

The young man paused and thought, with his hand on the vicar's arm.

"One thing," he said, "I would stipulate, however; as we are a good deal in the dark, my reason for declining to take charge of the key would be but half answered, as I must be a great deal in this house, and there may be other keys that open it, and I can't possibly answer for servants, and other people who will be coming and going, unless you will kindly come into the next room with me for a moment."

The vicar consented; Mr. Marston was eloquent. Mrs. Shackleton was sent for, and with less reluctance opened the door for the vicar, whom she loved. She did not leave it, however—they did not stay long. In a few minutes the party withdrew.

"Won't you have some luncheon?" asked Richard, in the hall.

"No, thank you," said the vicar, "I am very much hurried. I am going to see that poor boy to whom Mr. Blount has been so kind, and who is, I fear, dying."

And with a few words more, and the key again in his keeping, he took his leave.

I was all this time in my favourite haunt, alone, little thinking that the hero of my dreams was near, when suddenly I saw him walking rapidly up the path.

With a cry, I ran to meet him. He seemed delighted and radiant with love as he drew me to him, folded me for a moment in his arms, and kissed me passionately.

He had ever so much to say; and yet, when I thought it over, there was nothing in it but one delightful promise; and that was that, henceforward, he expected to see a great deal more of me than he had hitherto done.

There was a change in his manner, I thought; he spoke with something of the confidence and decision of a lover who had a right to command.

He was not more earnest, but more demonstrative; I might have resented his passionate greeting, if I had been myself less surprised and happy at his sudden appearance. He was obliged to go down to the village, but would be back again, he said, very soon. It would not do to make

people talk, which they would be sure to do, if he and I were not very cautious.

Therefore I let him go, without entreaty or remonstrance, although it cost me an indescribable pang to lose him, even for an hour, so soon after our long separation.

He promised to be back in an hour, and although that was nearly impracticable, I believed him. Lovers "trample upon impossibilities."

By a different route I came home. He had said :

"When I return, I shall come straight to the drawing-room ; will you be there ?"

So to the drawing-room I went. I was afraid to leave it even for a moment, lest some accident should make him turn back, and he should find the room empty. There was to me a pleasure in obeying him, and I liked him to see it.

How I longed for his return ! How restless I was ! How often I played his favourite airs on the piano ; how often I sat at the window, looking down at the trees and the mere, in the direction from which I had so often seen his boat coming, you will easily guess.

All this time I had a secret misgiving. There was a change in Richard's manner, as I have said ; there was confidence, security, carelessness—a kind of carelessness—not that he seemed to admire me less—but it was a change. There seemed something ominous about it.

As time wore on I became so restless that I could hardly remain quiet for a minute in any one place. I was perpetually holding the door open, and listening for the sounds of horses' hoofs, or wheels, or footsteps. In vain.

An hour beyond the appointed time had passed ; two hours. I was beginning to fancy all sorts of horrors. Was he drowned in the mere ? Had his horse fallen and killed him ? There was no catastrophe too improbable to be canvassed among the wild conjectures of my terror.

The sun was low, and I almost despairing, when the door opened, and Richard came in.

I had heard no sound at the door, no step approaching, only he was there.

FAIR PLAY FOR THE BIRDS.

AN Act of Parliament is a great and mighty thing. We have all to bow down and reverence it, or at all events to obey it. If we offend against any of its enactments, great or small, and plead that we never heard of them, the plea is held in-

valid by judge, jury, magistrate, and policeman. We are told that our ignorance is no excuse, and that it is our duty to know the law, and conform to it, under all the usual penalties of fine or imprisonment, or both together. But if we know the law and can't understand it ? What then ? The reply is that that is our business, and not the business of the law or the law-maker, and that we are punishable for our want of comprehension. And if the law is a farce, a humbug, a jumble, a muddle, a contradiction, and an absurdity, what then ? Ay, there's the rub ! If we are a member of parliament or a minister we must do our duty to the best of our ability, and endeavour to get the law repealed or amended ; or if we are a thousand, or ten thousand, or a million of people who are aggrieved by it, and will work together on the platform, in the press, and in parliament, we may if we are thoroughly in earnest, and in the course of a generation or so, get the law altered and reduced into the formulas of common sense. If we can do none of these things, we must make the best of a bad bargain, or as the Americans say, "grin and bear it."

Some time during the session of 1872, and possibly in a thin house, after midnight, when the few members present were drowsy, weary, and inattentive, an Act was passed for the protection of some of the wild birds of the British Isles. The Act came into operation on the 15th of March, 1873, and is technically known as the Act of the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth of Victoria, chapter seventy-eight. It is a very short Act, and declares that "Whereas it is expedient to provide for the protection of certain wild birds of the United Kingdom during the breeding season, from the 15th of March to the 1st of August every year, any person who shall knowingly or with intent kill, wound, or take, or expose or offer for sale any of the wild birds enumerated in the schedule shall, on conviction before a magistrate, be liable to a fine not exceeding five shillings and costs." Any by-passer who may happen to witness the perpetration of an offence of the kind is empowered to ask the name and address of the offender, in order to inform against him ; and if the offender refuse to give name and address, or give false ones, he will incur another liability to a fine of ten shillings and costs, and may be imprisoned till the fine be paid. It will be seen that the provisions of the Act apply not only to those who kill, with the gun or otherwise, but to those who entrap or snare, or "take"

wild birds. All this seems exceedingly fair and just to the poor wild birds, and no doubt appeared to be so to the sleepy legislators by whose instrumentality the Bill of 1872 became law. But the apparent fairness disappears on examination, and the Act reveals itself, either as a well-meant but inefficient piece of sentimentalism, or a cunning scheme for the better preservation of pheasants, partridges, and grouse by means of the destruction of all the birds of prey that inhabit our islands. The Act declares that the words "wild birds shall, for all its purposes, be deemed to include the birds specified in the schedule." The schedule occupies but one page of the Act, and contains the names of no more than seventy-nine birds, some of them birds of passage, which only favour us during the spring and summer, and others which remain with us all the year round. The list, which is a curiosity both for what it contains and for what it omits, is as follows:

Avocet	Redstart
Bittern	Robin redbreast
Blackcap	Ruff and reeve
Chiff-chaff	Sanderling
Coot	Sandgrouse
Creeper	Sandpiper
Crossbill	Sealark
Cuckoo	Shoveller
Curlew	Siskin
Dotterel	Snipe
Dunbird	Spoonbill
Dunlin	Stint
Flycatcher	Stone curlew
Godwit	Stonechat
Golden-crested wren	Stonehatch
Goldfinch	Summer snipe
Greenshank	Swallow
Hawfinch or grossbeak	Swan
Heidge-sparrow	Swift
Kingfisher	Teal
Landrail	Thicknee
Lapwing	Titmouse (longtail)
Mallard	Titmouse (bearded)
Martin	Wagtail
Moorhen	Warbler (Dartford)
Nightingale	Warbler (reed)
Nightjar	Warbler (sedge)
Nuthatch	Whaup
Owl	Wheatear
Oxbird	Whinchat
Pewit	Whimbrel
Phalerope	Widgeon
Pipit	Woodcock
Plover	Wild duck
Ploverspage	Woodlark
Pochard	Woodpecker
Purre	Woodwren
Quail	Wren
Redpole	Wryneck
Redshank	

The author of this schedule seems not to have been a scientific ornithologist, or he would not have enumerated the plover, the lapwing, the pewit, and the whaup, as four distinct birds, seeing that they are but four names for one creature, two of the names being English, and two of them Scotch or

Northumbrian. The list of seventy-nine is thus reduced to seventy-six. There is only one bird of prey, the owl, which the framers of the Act have thought it worth while to protect, a favour which is somewhat incomprehensible, when it is considered that other carnivorous birds have quite as many claims on our compassion as the owl, and that many of them are far more beautiful. Not that the owl ought not to be taken under the care of the legislature, but that if he is, for good and sufficient reasons, to be protected during a season, the hawk and the falcon, who are quite as useful as he in the economy of nature, ought to share the privilege.

As far as it goes the Act is right. But it does not go far enough; and if right partially might have been made right entirely. Granted the right of these seventy-six birds enumerated in the schedule, to live and propagate their kind—subject to the superior right of man, to use them for his benefit, without annihilating the species—why should not the wiseacres who framed the Act have admitted the right of other birds, all as beautiful and useful as them, to the same forbearance? If the hedge-sparrow is to be protected from the gun and the trap—from the 15th of March to the 1st of August—why not the house-sparrow? If the nightingale, the poet of the evening, is to find favour in the eyes of the British legislature, why not the beautiful skylark, the poet of the morning, singing, as Shakespeare says, "at heaven's gate," and pouring out its delicious anthems of joy and gratitude, far away up in the blue sky? And if it is to be a finable offence to kill or capture a cuckoo, why should not the thrush and the blackbird—the merle and the mavis of old times—be as tenderly dealt with? Indeed, it may be asked why they should not be more tenderly dealt with, and more carefully protected, considering not only their beauty, and their song, but the great services which they render to the farmer and the gardener, by their depredations on the too prolific insect life of the summer. The cuckoo is of no particular use in the economy of nature; he is a lazy or an unskilful bird, that cannot build his own nest, like his superiors, whose houses and lodgings he wrongfully misappropriates, and is at the best what Wordsworth calls him, a "wandering voice," very pleasant to hear to those who are weary of the winter and look forward with hopeful anticipation to the summer. But the thrush and the blackbird sing infinitely better, have more than two notes in their

voices, and are honester and more useful birds, yet their names do not appear in the schedule. Anybody licensed to carry a gun may kill or wound them, anybody unlicensed to carry a gun may "take" or snare them. Again, it is an offence against this particular Act to kill, wound, or take that pretty little songster, the goldfinch, during eighteen weeks of the year, but it is no offence to kill, wound, or take a linnet, a songster which many prefer, and which certainly merits, in as high a degree as the goldfinch, the kindly regard of every lover of nature. Running over the list of the favoured birds, and recalling only from memory, and without the aid of Buffon, Yarrell, Wood, or any other ornithological writer, I find among the unfavoured birds, or those not included in the operations of the Act, all the varieties of the sparrow tribe (the hedge-sparrow excepted), of which there are sixty-seven: the hawk, the sparrow-hawk, the falcon, the starling, the magpie, the rook, the chough, the crow, the raven, the jackdaw, the jay, the chaffinch, the bullfinch, the greenfinch, the fieldfare, the yorling, or yellow-hammer, the bunting (and all its varieties), the dove or pigeon (and all its varieties), the heron, the butcher-bird (the shrike), and the eagle. This list is independent of the sea birds, for the protection of which, in certain seasons, a separate Act was passed in a previous session. Upon what principle, or upon what classification, all these birds have been outlawed by the framers of the Act of 1872, it is difficult to imagine. Why, for instance, are the owls and the owl tribe to be protected, when the noble eagle in all its varieties is left to the slaughterman, who may or who may not be or call himself a sportsman?

Possibly the Act is not such a stupid mistake as it appears at first glance to be, but a device, under the cloak of a seeming humanity, to throw dust in the sleepy eyes of the public, and conduce to the better preservation of game. All the carnivorous birds of the British Isles, with the sole exception of the owl, as already mentioned, are to be left to the mercy of the unmerciful. The hawk and the falcon—in which our ancestors took such wholesome, jovial, out-of-door pleasure, and which sat on the wrists of noble knights and lovely ladies in the days when nobles were not raders, and did not send their poultry to market—are considered to be vermin by the gamekeepers, and the gamekeepers' masters of our day, and are destroyed accordingly, with a ruthlessness which is rendered more

ruthless by the mercenary greed of the shop. I must own that when I pass a barn door or outhouse in the country, in a gentleman's park, and see the rotting skeletons of hawks, falcons, owls, and butcher-birds, intermingled with those of stoats, weasels, ferrets, and other animals, suspected of stealing the eggs of game, stuck up against the wall, as if to warn all such predatory creatures of the dangers that they incur in making war against the sacred birds of the English landowners, I feel as if I should like to stick up a gamekeeper beside them to keep them company.

Mr. Waterton, the late eminent naturalist, would not allow any wild birds to be destroyed on his estate. The birds of prey were as much the objects of his care and regard as the gentler birds that filled the woodlands with their music; and he determined, as far as in him lay, not to disturb the balance of nature by making war upon any bird whatsoever, believing, as we all should believe, that man has no right to deprive his humbler fellow-creatures of the life that God has given them, unless it be for food, or unless the creature be noxious or dangerous to humanity, like the wolf, the tiger, or the venomous reptile. The consequence was that the noxious and undue increase of small birds, consumers of grain and fruit, and destroyers of orchards and gardens, like the sparrow and finch tribes, and those insatiable gluttons, the wood-pigeons, was prevented by the natural agencies of the birds of prey. The legislature ought to imitate Mr. Waterton's policy in this respect, and protect all the wild birds of the British Isles, without any exception whatever, during the period of breeding and incubation. This would be a wise measure, and fair play to the birds. The Act of 1872 is an injustice and an absurdity, and is pervaded by no principle of equity. It protects many useless birds—the hedge-sparrow, for instance—and, as we have seen, grants no protection to such universal favourites as the lark, the thrush, and the blackbird. It protects the widgeon, but allows the pigeon to be dealt with as seems good to cockney sportsmen and other bird destroyers. It goes out of its way to protect the robin redbreast, a bird which the vulgarest boor and wickedest urchin of any parish in England would not think of killing. But the Act has not a word to say for the yellow-hammer or yellow yorling, which the same boys, who respect and spare the robin for the sake of an old song, persecute unrelentingly, on the

strength of another piece of verse, which libels the poor bird for the sake of the rhyme, and calls it "Yellow, yellow yorling, you are the devil's darling." But the inconsistencies of the Act are beyond enumeration, and can only be remedied by an amended Act, protecting all birds, whether graminivorous, or carnivorous, or omnivorous, during the breeding period.

Another defect in the law is that it enacts no penalties against bird's-nesting. If the object of the Act is to preserve some (it ought to try to preserve all) of the wild birds of these islands, it ought to have protected the eggs as well as the parent birds during the season of maternity.

Fair play for birds of all kinds, that is what is wanted. It is not given by the Act of 1872, which might be easily amended by the simple omission of the schedule, and the substitution of the words "all of the wild birds," instead of "some of the wild birds," in the body of the Act. Will no member of parliament undertake the task?

FROM SEVASTOPOL TO BALAKLAVA.

"Now for Balaklava!" cries my companion, starting up from a heterogeneous breakfast of cabbage-soup, dried fish, veal-cutlets, water-melon, grapes, and café au lait, and assuming the peculiarly dogged expression of the British martyr when about to be cast into the arena of sight-seeing.

"Done with you!" respond I; "and, now I think of it, we'll take our friend Vasili (that soldier we were talking to last night, you know) to do a bit of guide-book for us."

Vasili—a stalwart Russian grenadier, with the scars of Balaklava still legible on his weather-beaten visage—is ready enough to enlist, with the prospect of a bottle of vodka as his honorarium; and, half an hour later, we were trudging manfully up the main street of Sevastopol, under the glorious sunshine of a real autumn day in the Crimea.

Certainly there is no season like October for a visit to the coast of the Black Sea; and the celebrated invalid who, on learning that the old style is still retained in Russia, went thither that he might have twelve days longer to live, might well have plumed himself upon the success of his experiment, had he landed where we are now. Behind us, like the phantoms of a troubled dream, lie cold winds and drifting snows,

fur wrappers and double windows; around us are bright sunshine and cloudless skies, butterflies hovering enjoyingly on the warm, voluptuous air, and ruddy peasants in shirt-sleeves, proffering us huge clusters of ripe grapes. For us, at least, from Russia to Italy there is but one step.

And so we march onward, past the crumbling ruins of the redoubtable Flagstaff Battery, along the lip of the Vorontzoff ravine; upward over the wide sweep of bare upland, scarred by trenches and embankments which have an ugly significance to a military eye; till, about midway across the great plateau, we halt to take breath and look about us.

"They've got the round tower up again on the Malakoff Hill, you see," I remark, pointing to a white patch on the green outline of the furthest ridge. "Not that it matters much, for, with our present artillery, they'd have to fortify the whole plateau instead of only the town; and besides, the place is going to be a trading port now."

"Fancy Sevastopol a trading port! However, they seem to be going ahead with the clearing of that space for the great quay, along the southern harbour yonder; but where's this canal to be that you were talking of?"

"Up from the Balaklava basin; it's to be the military harbour now, you know—along the valley of the Tchernaya, and round to the head of the great harbour. It's to cost fourteen million roubles (nearly two million pounds). Then the railway—there's the cutting yonder, that grey streak away to the northward. They're working the three tunnels between this and the Belbek from both ends at once; and they count upon having the line open as far as Simferopol by the end of 1873. See, there's the farm-house where Lord Raglan died. Come and have a look at it."

As we descend towards Balaklava, the little wicker-work hovels of the Tartar herdsmen begin to dot the slopes on either side; and their sallow, beardless, pudding-faced occupants stare at us with a wide-eyed wonder which proves that (at this season at least) foreign intruders are a rarity. Only one of the number remains utterly unmoved—a fine-looking old man, who is seated on a sheepskin at the door of his hut, with stern bronzed features, which look doubly grim in their frame of snow-white hair. He replies courteously to our salutations, but without losing for a moment the stately impassibility which is the birthright of Oriental races. It is a

strange contrast! On one side railways, and steamers, and telegraphs, and all the appliances of civilisation; on the other the last representative of the ancient barbarism, unchanged since the days when his forefathers swept all Russia as with a whirlwind, six hundred years ago. One can hardly conceive a stranger or a more touching spectacle than this grand, lonely, irreclaimable old savage, lingering in the midst of a world which has long outgrown and forgotten him.

Keeping steadily eastward, we debouch at length upon a great semicircle of smooth green hillside, in front of which, at some little distance, lies a round knoll, and beyond it a wide, level valley, flanked by low hills. The knoll is that once occupied by the Turkish redoubt which Liprandi stormed at the opening of the battle; the open space beyond is the scene of the Light Cavalry charge.

"What a handful they must have looked, dashing up that pass!" says my companion. "They may well say it was the finest thing ever done."

"Ay, that's the place!" strikes in Vasili, guessing by the direction of our eyes what we are talking about. "They came upon us as if they were sure of us already; and we—although there were enough of us to swallow 'em whole—we were so taken aback by their daring, that we fairly ran, there's no denying it! It was in trying to save one of our guns that I got this" (pointing to a fearful scar across his left cheek and temple). "However, they were brave fellows, and I bear 'em no grudge; 'he who remembers by-gones, out with his eye!'"*

A few minutes later, we stand upon the edge of a smooth land-locked basin, overshadowed by huge walls of rock, along the base of which runs the straggling line of little particoloured dog-kennels which represents the "town of Balaklava." The whole place, harbour and all, looks exactly as though it had strayed into this cul-de-sac long ago and had never been able to find its way out again; and it is sufficiently comical to read upon the front of one little whitewashed hovel, bigger by a single room than the rest of its congeners, a huge inscription, running literally as follows:

THE AMERICAN HOTEL.

The Logins for the Anglish Captings.

Ax up the Stars.

"I've heard of the old moons being chopped up into stars, but never of the stars being

similarly hashed," remarks my comrade; and not without considerable thought do we at length resolve this hieroglyphic into "Ask up-stairs." Certainly Balaklava now bears little token of having once been a central point in one of the greatest sieges on record; but the ruins of the old Genoese castle, standing gauntly up against the sky from the crest of the overhanging ridge, show that the value of the position was fully appreciated by the best soldiers of the Middle Ages. Of course we are bound to climb up and inspect them; but the ascent, even for personal friends of Mont Blanc and the Great Pyramid, is anything but an easy matter. Not without considerable damage to our clothes, and a sevenfold heating of our already furnace-like faces, do we at length reach the top, where the glorious seaward view amply repays our exertions. The "inhospitable Pontus" is in one of his most genial moods; and the dancing ripples of the blue sea, the magnificent coast-line extending to right and left as far as the eye can reach, the rich southern sky overhanging all, blot out for the moment all memory of the great catastrophe.

But when I turn my face landward, all is changed in a moment. Over the whole landscape, from Balaklava harbour to the head of the Inkermann valley, broods that nameless something which marks the man who has suffered beyond the measure of his fellows, or the soil which has been blasted by some great historical tragedy. In all my travels I have seen no grander or gloomier spectacle than the scene of that great carnival of death in its grim, utter desolation. Ruins everywhere—the ruins of the Russian Sevastopol, the Tartar Inkermann, the Genoese Balaklava, the Greek Chersonesus. Streets without an inhabitant, walls hacked through and through by cannon-balls, huge barracks gaping shell-like over heaps of ruin, and vast batteries crumbling into shapeless mounds of dust. Still, along the great plateau, one may see the lines of approach that once crept up, foot by foot, to the borders of the doomed city; still bristles along the crest of the Malakoff the formless ridge of earth which five thousand Frenchmen died to win; over the valley of Balaklava one can trace, as upon a map, the fatal charge of the Six Hundred; on the heights of Inkermann the caverns are still peopled with peasant families, as in the days of the great struggle; but the life, and the beauty, and the glory of Sevastopol are gone for ever—

Three hours later, in the silence of the autumn sunset, I climb the hill of the Redan; and, looking round upon it, feel once more—as I have felt at the first sight of Moscow, or Lisbon, or the Court of the Mamelukes at Cairo, or the Et-Meidann-square in Constantinople—how hard it is, even upon the very scene of a great historical tragedy, to realise the grim story of its past. Few can now picture to themselves the solid towers of the Kremlin melting in a whirlpool of lapping flames, or the dainty white streets and terraced gardens of Lisbon surging with the heave of the great earthquake, or the stately Turkish square and the solemn Egyptian citadel roaring with the clamour and hurly-burly of the two bloodiest massacres on record. And here, too, on this great battle-field of five nations, little trace remains of the evil past. The terrible Redan has crumbled into a shapeless heap of sandy earth; and the lambs frolic over the smooth green turf, and the grasshoppers chirp among the mouldering stones, as if no sound of war had disturbed the spot since the world began. Man's ravage is transient as himself; and it would be difficult, even for one who has seen it, to people this quiet hillside with the fierce turmoil and hellish uproar of seventeen years ago. And yet, on the whole face of the earth, there are few spots more thoroughly impressive. How many threads of existence, widely separated through their whole course, were here united in death!—how many men, who never knew each other in life, came hither from the ends of the earth to look one another in the face, for one fierce short moment, under the deepening shadows of the grave! In that hot crush of battle, to how many on either side came the thought: "These are brave men, men whom we might have loved; but now it is too late for anything save to kill and be killed." And so they slew, and were slain; and on the spot where they fell, the gallant defenders have reared a pious tribute to their memory.* Far away in peaceful England, in some quiet woodland cottage wreathed with honeysuckle, or some quaint old farm-house with rook-haunted gable-ends, there hangs the rudely-painted likeness of some English lad who lies here beneath our feet. When they last saw him, how gallantly he stood up in all the pride of his new uniform and jauntily-slung knapsack, telling them, with a slight

tremor in his cheery voice, that he was going "to thrash them Rooshan blackguards," and would have some grand stories for them when he came back. And where is he now? Look down and read the inscription upon the monument: "To the memory of those who fell in the trenches and assaults upon the Redan, 1855." So should the epitaphs of all brave men be written. Many courtly phrases, many lines of sounding flattery, have been inscribed upon the tombs of famous soldiers which have not one tithe of the power and pathos of these few simple words. They contain a whole history in themselves—a history of cruel suffering and heroic endurance, of a grand and successful struggle against overwhelming odds—the tale told by the tumulus of Marathon, by the half-effaced ridges of Waterloo. On this spot, for eleven long months of stern trial, the fears, and hopes, and prayers, and agonised longings of a whole nation were concentrated. Around this quiet hillside, where the sheep feed peacefully in the declining sunshine, thousands of our best and bravest came cheerfully up to the long martyrdom which was only ended by death. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, these stout English hearts "endured hardness," as good soldiers of the great cause which sent them forth. "The greatest lesson of life," said Napoleon, "is to know how to die;" and that lesson, at least, those who lie here had learned as few men upon earth have ever done.

On the further shore of the great harbour, overlooking the smooth green slopes and rippling waters upon which the last gleam of the setting sun lingers lovingly, rises another monument, telling a tale equally mournful and equally heroic. Beneath the shadow of the huge pyramid that crowns the northern slope, lie the relics of the conquered army, watching even in death over the ruins of the fair city which they gave their lives to save. For these, too, sorrows a mighty nation. In Volhynian corn-lands and Moscovian forests, on the sandy plains of the Volga and the purple moors of the Don, the names of those who lie here are still remembered with sad and solemn triumph. "God and the Czar needed them, and they went"—went to death poured out upon them in a thousand forms, in the fierce short fever of battle, in the wasting agony of disease, in the grinding torment of famine, in the slow murder of frost. Never was a bad cause better defended. What could these brave, simple

* It is lamentable to be forced to add, that the monument is literally scarred from top to bottom with the names of *English* visitors.

souls know of political intrigues and imperial caprices, the ambition of a headstrong despot, or the rapacity of a corrupt administration? To the poor peasant-soldier only one thing was clear—that the darling “mother-land” was in danger, and that he must die to save her. And die he did, with a courage and constancy which many a famous historical martyr might have envied. Such a defeat as Sevastopol is well worth ten victories. To the conquerors it is but one more splendid example of native courage and endurance; to the conquered it is the opening of a new era, the fourth act in that great drama of which the first three were the reigns of Peter the Great, Catherine the Second, and Alexander the First. “The Crimean war,” said an eminent Russian critic to me the other day, “has been the salvation of our country; it first opened our eyes to our real condition, and set us to correct what we had thought perfect.” And well might he say so. It is often the case, that the dormant energies of a great nation are best aroused by a stunning blow from without. The *Allia*, *Furculæ Candinæ*, *Asculum*, were so many hard strokes to awaken the indomitable spirit of ancient Rome. The invasion of 1792 was a spur in the side of Republican France; the battle of Bull Run in that of Federal America. And thus, too, it may come to pass, that the civilised Russian of the twentieth century will look with an eye of forgiveness upon the crumbling hillocks, steeped in the best blood of Russia, which have been the grave of the old empire and the cradle of the new; the grave of the ancient régime, with all its lonely pride and useless magnificence—the cradle of a nobler and a wider supremacy, which speaks not through the thunder of cannon nor the fiat of headstrong despotism, and yet, throughout the whole earth, finds no language in which its voice is not heard.

GREEN LEAVES.

THE sweet leaves, the fresh leaves, the young green leaves,

The leaves in the sunshine growing;
Whilst the martin twitters beneath the eaves,
And the cowslip bells are blowing!

The dormouse awakes from his winter sleep,
And the black merle pipes on the cherry;
And the lily-buds, from their green sheath peep,
And maidens and men are merry.

With the fresh life-blood of the new-born spring
The elixir of love and pleasure;
When Hope on the threshold of Life takes wing
To search for its golden treasure.

O green leaves, O fresh leaves, O young green leaves,
When lovers in lanes are roaming,
You are dearer to youth, than the rich red sheaves.

For they tell with their glorious spikes of gold
Of a hope that has ripened to glory:
But green leaves whisper a hope untold,
And fond youth lists to the story!

THE OBSERVATIONS OF MONSIEUR CHOSE.

I. MONSIEUR CHOSE'S LAST BITE.

“You have a bite, Monsieur Chose.”

Monsieur Chose had rested his rod upon the parapet of the quay; and was in conversation with Father Asticot.

A remarkable couple. Monsieur Chose was a barrel planted upon two lively little legs that paddled gallantly under their weight, a well-fed, perhaps over-fed, man, with an eye that twinkled merrily to the music of a corkscrew. His hands were so fat, it was with difficulty he put the bait upon his hook, and was often obliged to Father Asticot's fingers for helping him. Father Asticot was a tall lean man, with a ragged, drooping, grey moustache, a weary eye and wrinkled face; and his clothes proclaimed the fallen, needy man. His sabots clattered upon the quay, and the anglers turned to laugh at his thin shanks covered with blue patched trousers, and the green coat he had worn, his customers said, in their pleasant way, since he was a little boy.

“The pot-au-feu boils,” said Father Asticot, while he measured a handsome handful of lively bait to his old customer. “There are beauties for you. With that you will take fish as fast as you can pull them out. Yes, the saucepan boils, the scum is rising. They will come and take your rod out of your hands, perhaps the watch out of your pocket. They will empty your purse, you will find them between your sheets, and then your turn to sell these little beauties will come.”

While Father Asticot spoke he surveyed his lively store of bait, and turned it over, with the air of an artist who was satisfied with himself.

“Ah! Bah! old grumbler!” replied Monsieur Chose. “Let them come—your rascals. We shall not give them the trouble of going home again to their boozing kens. Ah! the rogues, they are coming to the top again, are they? They shall have no quarter this time.”

“You have a bite, Monsieur Chose,” cried his neighbour a second time.

Monsieur Chose rushed to his rod. Great excitement among the spectators. Every eye was fixed upon the float.

“I am quite sure you have not seen the

while he, with the rest, watched the sport of Monsieur Chose.

"A fig for the Tattoo," testily answered Monsieur Chose, his hands trembling with the excitement of the moment.

"It was a big one," calmly observed the neighbour, a retired captain, who had deserted Mars for minnows. The reader, it may be, has observed that when a fellow-sportsman calls your attention to a bite which you have lost, he assures you in a friendly way, that it must have been a big fish.

"It's this rascal Father Asticot, with his stories about the blackguards of his quarter, the Tattoo, and——"

Here the captain (Tonnerre, of the Zouaves of the Guard) rolled a terrible oath in his throat, and glared at the dealer in bait, who stepped up to the officer, and with an appealing look, opened his can of treasures. The soldier melted to the fisherman, and his weather-tanned face beamed. Was it in human nature to be hard upon the breeder of such gentles?

"But it is true, captain," Father Asticot took occasion to observe, apologetically. "It is quite true. They are boiling to the surface. They are sharpening their knives, and this time, they say, there shall be no mistake."

"There shall be none, old gossip," growled Captain Tonnerre, with a rattle of oaths that died away in his throat. "Meantime, give me a fresh bait, and let it be a beauty."

Father Asticot selected a prize gentle. "As fat as a retired bourgeois, as Camphre would say"—the old man spoke to himself—"and this is the proper way to serve him." The gentle writhed upon the hook. "That's what's coming; read the Tattoo, gentlemen, that's all. Don't blame me."

Monsieur Chose threw down his rod, and turned upon Asticot.

"Be off, old rascal that you are. You have driven the fish from my line. You bring us bad sport, with your stories of the fetid population of your quarter."

"Read the Tattoo, that is my answer—the Tattoo of this morning. It will make your flesh creep. I salute you, gentlemen." With a mock-heroic air that turned the laugh of the spectators upon Monsieur Chose and his neighbour, the old gentleman lifted his greasy cap, and made a profound bow to his customers.

The blouses who were in the crowd, hoping to see a minnow landed before they went on their way to the shop, or the grog-shop, were stirred to the exercise of their

grim humour by Father Asticot. Monsieur Chose was told to amuse himself while there was yet time, for he would be boiled down presently to grease the wheels of the triumphant car of the sovereign people. It was certainly not with what he caught that he had grown so fat. Was madame quite well? Then Captain Tonnerre (who was a little man) was taken in hand. He was the drum-major of the hundred and first regiment, the retired colonel of the Ambigu, General Boum out of an engagement.

"What can there be in the Tattoo to-day?" said Monsieur Chose to Captain Tonnerre. "The old man is right. The scum is stirring."

"We will skim it with our swords," Tonnerre answered, his face set, and oaths rattling in his throat, but his eye fixed steadily upon his float.

The talking and laughing became louder. Monsieur Chose turned for an instant, and defiantly faced the crowd. He was received with shouts of laughter, and a volley of witticisms of the coarsest and dirtiest sort. It was suggested that he should be cast in bronze at once, and presented to Monsieur Thiers. Captain Tonnerre was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Batignolles.

"It is ignoble!" the captain growled.

At this moment he had a bite, and landed his fish. The uproarious hilarity of the blouses covered the old soldier with shame, while he unhooked the smallest of minnows; and when, with a superb air of disdain, he cast his line back into the water, a universal shout of "Ah! glutton, would you empty the river?" was raised. Then there were speculations as to the sauce with which the general would eat his salmon. He was recommended to keep the tail half, and try it cold, with oil. "It's madame, the generale, who will be delighted!" piped a brazen gamin.

"What can there be in the Tattoo?" murmured Monsieur Chose. "Why, they're surrounding us, captain."

"Leave them to me," growled Tonnerre. "I will make very short work of them if they pass certain bounds."

They retreated when the captain wheeled sharply about from time to time; but pressed back towards the fishermen directly he turned his back upon them—laughing, joking, whistling, and singing more boisterously every time.

"Citizen fisherman," at length a leading gamin shouted, "command my services to carry home the friture. But you must

introduce me to the citoyenne, and we will have a fraternal banquet."

"Blackguard!" shouted Monsieur Chose, dropping his rod, and folding his fat arms with some difficulty. "I'll pull your ears all the way to the commissary of police. Blackguards all—be off!"

"Don't exasperate them," growled Tonnerre. "I have a bite."

"Exasperate them! The first who comes near me goes into the river."

"He's superb! He's statuesque! If there were only a photographer here. Don't stir, citizen. That's it, put on a severe air. Doesn't he look terrible? He's too fat for Hercules, but what a model for a tobacco jar!" A Paris crowd of blouses is a formidable body with the tongue.

"Leave them! Leave them, Monsieur Chose—you have a nibble," said the captain, suppressed rage giving a tremor to his voice.

"The fish may go to the devil!" replied Monsieur Chose, still facing the mocking crowd.

"He is making up his mind which he will eat! Ah, the ogre! Ah, the monster! But he doesn't look very fresh; suppose we wash him for dinner."

"Poltroons! Communards!" shouted Monsieur Chose, unable to control his anger.

The captain quietly laid his rod upon the ground, took the bait off his line, saying, "You have done it now, Monsieur Chose. That means war. Let it be so."

The crowd uttered a low general growl. Communards! There was no more play. The eyes of boys and men flashed fire. Two ringleaders tucked up their sleeves, muttering the word as a battle-cry, "Communards!"

Captain Tonnerre quietly put away his tackle—watching the tumult with one eye, and talking and swearing in his throat. Monsieur Chose stood firm, while the blouses yelled at him, approaching him with every shout; and the foremost blouse was within arm's length of his shoulder, when Father Asticot burst through the throng, and stood before his customers facing the readers of the Tattoo. The old man spoke to them as one having authority.

"Hands off! Detest the bourgeois, that is well; but respect the old man." With this Asticot solemnly lifted his cap. Then turning aside to Monsieur Chose and Captain Tonnerre, he whispered, "Get away as fast as you can."

The blouses, although touched by the father's appeal, were too deeply incensed

to be quieted with a word. Old men should behave like old men. The bourgeois had insulted the people, and he must offer an apology. The idea caused Monsieur Chose to shrug his shoulders as a mark of his supreme contempt. The movement was answered by a savage yell from the blouses; and it is not difficult to guess what the upshot of the difficulty would have been, had not Father Asticot, pointing to some kepis hastening towards them, said sternly:

"L'Autorité!"

"You were never in your life nearer becoming ground-bait," Captain Tonnerre observed to his fellow-sportsman when they had reached their café, and were enjoying the hour of absinthe.

Monsieur Chose had watched his last by the banks of the Seine.

Incited by the revelations of Father Asticot, and the demeanour of the blouses, he cast his line henceforth in waters much more troubled than those of the Seine, even when the floods are out.

II. TO PARIS IN SABOTS.

How blind are parents now-a-days! My brother Jules, for instance, has a strapping boy, just eighteen years of age; as strong as his father's shaft-horse; a rough country lad, who has had a fair education it is true, but who has not yet the force to make his way against the prejudices of the world. He is to come to Paris—to seek his fortune.

"Send him—in sabots," I wrote to his parent. "If you put him in leather, you are no father."

Madame Chose remonstrated with me, begging that I would not infuse bad ideas into the sound head of my brother, who was quietly making his fortune at Rennes; and, thank Heaven, had not yet taken to the unprofitable business of putting the world to rights.

"Since that unfortunate day," madame observed, "when you had an altercation with some blouses on the quay, and gave up the honourable pleasure of providing us with an occasional friture, you are a different man. You who have been content all your life with an occasional glance at the Débats, and a look at the Gazette des Tribunaux on Sundays or holidays, suddenly spend your money on the journalism of the Gavroches, and the gentlemen of Belleville and the barrières. You can't sleep at nights when there's an election on hundreds of leagues away; you who never took your nightcap off on the 4th of September. You caught that cold

which has lasted you half through the winter, hanging about the railway station to collect gossip from the deputies returning from Versailles. What have you to do with it all, Monsieur Chose? You have had work enough all your life: let them divide and subdivide; let them put themselves into committees and commissions of thirty, or a hundred and thirty if they like—what does it matter? They can't touch us; or if they could, your interference would not prevent them. Some day you'll mind what I say: burn all these disgusting papers, and ask me for your fishing-tackle again."

I have sometimes leaned towards my wife's way of thinking, saying to myself, "They can't take an egg out of my omelette, let the Assembly make a blunder every time it sits." But then I have reproached myself with the selfishness of this view, and recognised my duty as a citizen to educate myself for the proper discharge of my functions as a voter. I owe a duty also to my own flesh and blood. I am bound to afford my nephews and nieces, even my cousins in the third degree, the benefit of my study of the political drama that is playing under my nose. Minnow-fishing when the constitution hangs—nay, when three or four constitutions hang—in the balance, is the resource of an idiot.

Therefore, I repeat, I advised my brother to send his son to Paris—in sabots. And why? Because having seriously observed the times in which we live, I am persuaded that there is a golden ring in the clatter of sabots. People respect the wooden shoe. Out of the sabot, now-a-days, men step into bank parlours, enormous administrations, golden directorships, the Chamber of Deputies, nay, into presidential chairs. The world will have it so. To begin with, the lad who reaches Paris in sabots excites no envy; therefore he provokes no enemy to oppose him. Every little step he takes in the world redounds to his honour, and compels applause, provided he keeps the clogs in sight. A trifling slit or two in his garments will do him good service. The fewer sous he can show the better. When he becomes a great and affluent man, the world will comfort itself with the thought that time was when he had no stockings, and when his blue feet shook in the damp straw of his sabots. It is an offence to be prosperous without having been forlorn and supperless; to have a high hand in the office you have not swept; to smoke an Havannah on the Boulevards

when you have never prospected for cigar ends. Before you are permitted to wear clean hands, you must be provided with substantial evidence of a time when they were as black as any ragman's. Society will no longer permit you to have been a comely bird, *ab ovo*.

This is the reason why so many of the great men who govern us to-day keep their sabots in their ante-chambers; go out to dinner with them; even show them in the tribune of the Assembly. In the East men remove their shoes to pass into the presence chamber; with us the wearer of the wooden shoe is a privileged person.

I gave Madame Chose two examples. She finds it difficult to keep her temper when I mention the name of old Asticot; but I imposed silence while I unfolded his touching story. He began life in dazzling shoes, and with full pockets. Richly fitted out, and fired with the generous enthusiasm of youth, he went with the expedition to Greece in 1828. In that noble cause he first figured in public life—but the result was dismal. Returned from Missolonghi he was reduced to give lessons in modern Greek to the studious youth of the time, whose name was not legion even in those days. He was a professor before he was thirty—poor devil!—professor of Greek, Greek history, Greek everything! His clothes got shabbier month after month; his class-room echoed with his solitary tread. And still he held to his chair, and loved his Greek. Beyond it the world did not exist for him. He lived on bread and grapes in the summer; on sausage and bread, and cabbage soup, in the winter. He was on his way to the sabots in which he should have started.

Weary with disappointment, he entered his class-room on a certain morning, and found a score of people in it. Was the golden dream taking tangible shape at length? The professor took his place, with a flutter at the heart; and while he disposed his books, still the new pupils came flocking in—in hot haste to sip at the beloved fountain. The room was packed; he would never be able to make his voice heard through the hubbub. But he began addressing himself to the people who were close to his desk. He had not uttered many words when the rattle of musketry was heard in the street. "Again!" was murmured all over the room. Poor Asticot!—it was one of the bloody days of June; and the crowd in his class-room had rushed in to get beyond the reach of the soldiers, who were firing at random.

He broke down after that, sinking gradually through the strata of poverty's ranks. He was tutor in poor schools—the new one always poorer than the last. His heart hardened with his bread. That rattle of musketry which dissipated the delicious dream of a moment made him what is called an enemy of society. He got away to those regions of Paris where the higher you climb the lower you get; to the Rue Mouffard, then Belleville, and thereabouts. They finished the old man; took all the Greek out of him; made of his little learning a very dangerous thing indeed; and at last reduced him to be a breeder of gentles—and riots—after having failed with old clothes and as a street messenger.

Now had Father Asticot brought his faculties to Paris in wooden shoes, with wisps of straw for socks, he would have ended in a palm-embroidered coat—a member of the Institute.

Madame Chose was not convinced, although I strengthened my instance with a hundred others, and showed her Rachel singing for sous before the Boulevard cafés, the beggar Jew founding a race of millionaires, the wine-shop keeper's son starting for a throne.

I tried her another way, unfolding my evening paper with an impressive gesture.

"To begin with!" she cried. "Don't quote the papers to me. One says the President ought to be worshipped on our knees; the other that he ought to be nearer Cayenne than Versailles; a third that he wears his head still only because these are milksop times. He is angel and rogue; genius and madcap; patriot and base egotist. Fold up your paper, Monsieur Chose. In our happy days, when you were amiable enough to remember that I had a little weakness for Seine gudgeon, as I have told you very often, you were quite content with the Débats and the Gazette des Tribunaux.

I was not to be beaten from my ground, for I felt that the future of my nephew depended on my firmness.

I remarked that the times were critical, and that they were bringing new men to the front, but nearly all—I stuck to this—in sabots.

I had an excellent instance at hand. There had been a storm in the Assembly between the party of the Sabots and the party of the Lorgnons. The Lorgnons and Sabots, these are the rival factions that send France to bed every night with a revolver under her pillow, and wake her to

wonder what the form of government may be before the sun goes down. The Sabots would have touched the noses of the Lorgnons on the occasion in question, in spite of the ringing of the President's bell, had not some few rational men stood between. Well, a well-intentioned Lorgnon—and this is my instance—rose on the morrow of the disturbance, to suggest a middle course, that would give a secure day after tomorrow to his countrymen.

He had no more chance of carrying his point than poor Asticot had of making his fortune by teaching Greek. He was a marquis, to begin with. He was young, and he drove a mail-phaeton. He had come to Paris, in an express train, from the ancestral château. In all his life he had not earned the fraction of a red liard. He was sumptuously attired. The hands he raised in the declamatory passages of his harangue were white. His boots were of polished jet, and from his neck depended an eye-glass. Will any rational man tell me that this young nobleman had the least chance of making his way?

He spoke admirable sense in admirable French. He showed that he had studied well at college, and that he had mastered the public questions of his time. He recommended a fair, open, honourable, and liberal course. He was received with jeers by the triumphant Sabots, and covered with confounding epithets and jests. He was a Pitt in the bud. Where was his nurse? His big words and solemn warnings only reminded his enemies of a school-boy with a big pipe in his mouth. A big pipe! The Sabots are at home with this figure. Pipe-en-Bois is a prince among the Sabots, and the probability is that the audacious Lorgnon has never had a pipe between his lips in the whole course of his life. The pipe-and-beer policy is one of too robust a kind for the handling of the marquis. It is clear that he will never make way against the sturdy front of the Sabots. In any case he is too young. His words are those of wisdom and moderation; he has mastered the subject on which he is speaking; but where are his wrinkles; how much is he over fifty? There are dozens of people who proclaim his exceptional power, his application, his genius, his native eloquence. But will nobody falsify the registry of his birth, shake him out of his well-fitting clothes, soil his hands, shave his head, and lend him a pair of sabots? If not, he has no real friends.

He might have been tolerated on one condition, namely, that he had had an ap-

prenticeship to sedition to show, or a certificate of irreligion, or a diploma from some provincial school of revolt. But the wretched young man has never passed through the mud.

The marquis made an excellent speech, and his reward was a thrashing through the organs of the Sabots. Suppose he drops the Assembly, spurns the tribune, closes his books, and drives his mailphaeton off to the palaces of the painted ladies, and the clubs with convenient card-tables, and the turf where the heaviest bets are making, who will be the first to blame him and call down the scorn of the people upon him?—why, the Sabots, who yelled at him in the tribune.

"Therefore, madame, I observed, authoritatively, to my wife, who was still shaking her doubting head, "I shall write to Rennes, and advise Jules to send his boy to Paris in sabots. He is a likely lad, I hear, and I will not stand by and see his hopes destroyed by shoe-leather. Monsieur Thiers himself came humbly to the great city. Had the young Marseillais approached the capital in a drag, and with an escutcheon and liveries, do you think he would have been brought under the attention of the great Monsieur de Talleyrand, and have had an opportunity of wiping the nose of the young marquis (Monsieur de Talleyrand's grand-nephew), of whom I have been talking? Louis Feyron puts it very cleverly in the Figaro, madame."

"Don't talk to me about newspaper writers," answered Madame Chose. "I will not except even the Débats now-a-days; and—and—you haven't convinced me, Chose. Write as you please; I shall write to Madame Jules. The poor child's shoes will tell us who has the greater influence."

I could contain myself no longer, when my wife added:

"Better return to your gudgeon, my dear; there is nobody like Monsieur Chose to fish a friture."

I rushed off to my café and my club, for I had joined a club; but the mocking laugh of my wife sang in my head through two or three games of dominoes that evening.

WHAT IS A SUN?

THE more we learn about the Sun, the more does he puzzle us.

Our readers (who have hitherto been kept not ill supplied with solar news) will remember that something sensational may be expected from the next annual eclipse of the Sun, unless it should turn

out a private performance, hidden from the public by a curtain of clouds. The next couple of Transits of Venus, in the Decembers of 1874 and 1882 respectively,* are expected to tell us exactly how far off the Sun is, besides other interesting information. It is most desirable to improve that occasion, as no more transits of Venus will occur (they come in pairs, with intervals of eight years between them) until A.D. 2004 and 2012, when the present generation will care little about them. Meanwhile Monsieur Faye, the eminent French astronomer, has summarily given us the views most recently accepted respecting the physical constitution of the Sun. The problem is not of modern date. In all ages men have asked what can possibly be that splendid luminary which daily gives us heat and light, and how it is that he shines and warms us without being extinguished or even diminished in brightness.

Such still remains, in spite of incidental questions, the problem, "What is the nature of the Sun?" And more than that; through the progress of science and the discovery of instruments of un hoped-for power, that problem is split up into a multitude of details. The invention of telescopes has led to the study of the very various phenomena observed on the Sun's surface—the spots, the "facules," the distribution of extra-brilliant matter in little patches resembling willow-leaves or grains of rice. We ask why are the spots ordinarily confined within a somewhat narrow equatorial zone; why they multiply, like many animalcules, by self-division, segmentation, fissiparous multiplication; why groups of spots are lengthened out in the direction of the Sun's parallels of latitude; why they are periodically reproduced, and what causes the superior brightness of the rice-grains and facules—which do exist, although Huyghens was unwilling to admit them. "As if," he said, "there could be, in the Sun, anything brighter than the Sun himself!"

We see, then, what a multitude of problems have arisen with increased means of observation. At present the study of the Sun constitutes a distinct branch of astronomy. It has special methods, instruments, and even observatories, as that of Wilna in Russia, Palermo in Sicily, and Kew in England. It has journals and a literature of its own. The astronomers who have devoted themselves to it feel

* See A Long Look Out, vol. xix, of ALL THE YEAR ROUND, First Series, p. 174.

sure that they are on the track of grand discoveries, invested with a double interest, for the study of the Sun is the study of the stars, which are nothing else but suns like ours. Moreover, the forces brought into play on the Sun must react more or less directly on us, and furnish the clue to many terrestrial phenomena which hitherto are unexplained.

The ancients believed the firmament to be formed of a fifth and purely sidereal element, essentially possessing light and heat. The peculiarity of the stars was to be exempt from all change. The dogma was held, and taught as incontrovertible, in all the schools of antiquity and the Middle Ages, until the invention of telescopes, in 1610, showed it to be completely erroneous.

Even then, spots in the Sun seemed to many an utter impossibility. Father Scheiner, one of the first to discover them, dared not publish the fact under his real name. "Bah!" said his Provincial, Father Budée, to whom he confided the astounding fact, "I have read my Aristotle over and over again, and he mentions nothing of the kind. Make your mind easy, my son. The only spots on the Sun are those thrown into your eyes by the glasses of your new-fangled instrument."

Those spots are too strange to be fully considered now. We can only touch on some of their most important bearings. For instance, the Periodicity of their occurrence, in quantity, on the surface of the Sun, opens a very fertile field of speculation. On more than one occasion, the early observers had fancied they remarked a greater frequency of sun-spots at regular intervals; and an astronomer of Dessau, Monsieur Schwabe, resolved to verify the conjecture. Day by day he regularly noted the number of spots on the solar disc; from year to year he found the number to vary with a certain regularity; first increasing, then reaching a maximum during which the Sun daily exhibited numerous spots, then decreasing to a well-marked minimum, to recommence afterwards exactly the same course. Monsieur Schwabe's diligence was rewarded at the end of twenty years, by the establishment, beyond doubt, of the periodicity of the solar spots, the interval between two epochs of minimum spottiness being fixed, approximately, at ten years.

With this fact ascertained, Professor Wolf, of Zurich, undertook the collection of all previous observation of spots, in order, by comparing them, to discover any traces of this remarkable periodicity which they

might reveal. He drew up a list, going as far back as 1611, thus bringing to light the march of the phenomenon during two whole centuries and a half. The period of solar spotting thence deduced is eleven years and a half, or thereabouts—although with notable anomalies. The reader will have the goodness to put this period side by side with the interval of twelve years, occurring for some time past between rainy seasons like that of '72-3, pointed out here in a recent paper.*

Most educated persons have read of, if they have not noticed with their own eyes, the Variable Stars—certain of the stars called fixed, whose brightness varies periodically in a most extraordinary and hitherto unaccountable manner. Now, the least reflection will show a striking analogy which the Sun presents in this respect, to those variable stars. For those stars are suns, and the Sun is a star. The well-known stars Mira Ceti, β (beta) of Perseus, β of the Lyre, and others, undergo equally regular periodical fluctuations of splendour. True, the changes they exhibit are both more rapid and more considerable in degree than the Sun's. In Mira Ceti, for instance, the variation extends from the third magnitude, if not to absolute extinction, at least to invisibility.

Even modern observers have not looked these facts in the face without a certain amount of unconscious repugnance. The idea that a star can flicker for awhile, like the last efforts of a lamp, before it goes out, shocks old and long-forgotten preconceptions whose roots still retain their hold on our minds. But the case is simple, if we only admit that the stars have not existed always; that they have had their period of formation, and that they will equally pass through their period of decline, followed by final extinction.

These phenomena doubtless embrace lengths of duration out of all proportion to those we are in the habit of considering; but if we cannot observe them in Time, we are able to study them in Space. Space presents us, simultaneously, with stars in every phase of stellar existence; exactly as a forest enables us, on the very same day, to follow the growth of the oak from the sprouted acorn to the stag-headed patriarch. Consequently, in our present state of knowledge, we cannot help regarding the Sun as a variable star whose period of variation is long, and whose variation itself is still slight in degree.

* The Forms of Water; Mist and Rain. Jan. 25, 1873.

The case must here be briefly stated. The Sun is a globe whose mean density is a little greater than that of water, but whose outermost strata are evidently gaseous. The surface of this globe exhibits on a ground comparatively dark, innumerable assemblages of solid or liquid incandescent particles, forming distinct and separate clouds (the willow-leaves or rice-grains) of remarkably similar structure and size. Such is the Photosphere—the exterior luminous shell which contains the globe or mass of the Sun itself. This globe, perfectly spherical, turns on an invariable axis with a movement of rotation very different from ours and that of the planets of our system. On its surface there appear from time to time black spots which, at first sight, appear to be simple gaps or rents in the network of incandescent clouds. Those spots are pure accidents, whose nature we refrain from considering at present.

Evidently, the force and constancy of the solar radiation are connected with the brilliant rice-grains of the photosphere. Now, these incandescent clouds cannot last for ever—cannot eternally emit light and heat with the same formidable intensity. They must have some mode of incessant renovation. It is their formation and reproduction, therefore, which constitute the clue to the mystery. Their office must be to bring regularly to the surface the heat of the interior mass; without which, the photosphere, exhausted by its radiation into space, would soon die out. Moreover, the movements occasioned by the perpetual renewal of the photosphere, ought to modify the natural rotation of the globe, and to confer on it the special character which has just been mentioned.

Suppose this globe to contain, amongst other gases, a certain proportion of oxygen and of the metals of lime and magnesia in a state of vapour. In that condition, the mass, possessing but a feeble power of radiation, would be far from having the aspect of a sun. But when, rising to the surface, the gases reached a lower temperature, where the combination of the oxygen with the metallic vapours became possible—at that moment, clouds of white-hot dust would suddenly appear on the surface of the globe, incomparably more bright in splendour than the previous radiation had been. The photosphere would be spontaneously formed by the lowering of temperature at the surface of the Sun.

But the solid particles, the result of the

combination, will immediately fall towards the centre of the globe. In their fall, by passing through hotter strata, they will regain some of the heat lost by radiation outside, until they reach a point where the central furnace, destroying the combination, again sets the oxygen at liberty and disengages the metal in a state of vapour. This development and transformation will necessarily force a corresponding quantity of vapours upwards. These latter, undergoing a similar change, will reproduce the same phenomena. Under the influence of the lower outside temperature, they will combine as before, producing a fresh swarm of molecules of white-hot magnesia or lime.

Such is the mechanism to which Monsieur Faye attributes the ceaseless renewal of the photosphere. From every point of the brilliant surface there falls, towards the centre, a shower of solid or liquid particles which have radiated for awhile upon that surface, in the form of incandescent clouds. In the central strata, into which the shower falls, it is again transformed into vapour, thus forcing innumerable gaseous currents to mount vertically till they reach the photosphere, where they replace their predecessors in fulfilling the function of distributing light and heat throughout our system. And if the mass of the Sun, instead of being trifling, is actually enormous, do we not see that the play of ascending and descending currents will incessantly continue its regular action, so long as the gradually lowered temperature (not of the surface only but of the entire mass) shall not have contracted the interior strata sufficiently to make them offer resistance to these movements?

This apparent contradiction of opposite currents, upwards and downwards, invariably and incessantly following the direction of the radii of a gaseous sphere—one set consisting of ascending vapours, the other set of strings of falling liquid or solid drops—is not without analogy in nature. It occurs on earth every day, constituting the mechanism which affects the aerial circulation of our waters, furnishes the world with its envelope of clouds, and supplies the rain which fertilises our soil. Only, to make the assimilation complete, we must go back to the ancient days when the earth's crust was still hot, and the rain was reconverted into steam as soon as it touched the burning surface. Moreover, our liquid rain rarely falls on the spots whence its parent vapours originated, but is carried by the winds to other regions;

whereas, as the Sun has no true atmosphere, his white-hot metallic rain falls almost entirely in the same locality (if we may apply such a word to the fiery cloud-land) which gave it birth.

The Earth, we may say, has a Nephelosphere, or shell of clouds, fed by ascending currents of vapour, and supplying liquid descending currents. The Sun has a Photosphere, formed by analogous processes.

Such is Monsieur Faye's answer to Mr. Carrington's question, "What is a sun?" A sun is an excessively hot mass formed of permanent gases, and especially of vapours susceptible of condensation, animated also by a rotatory motion. Suspend this sphere, only moderately luminous, in space, and as soon as the external stratum has sufficiently cooled, it will put forth a dazzling photosphere, alimented by a system of ascending and descending currents. And the phenomenon will continue with sustained intensity, until the progressive contraction of the entire mass shall have stopped the currents and suppressed the photosphere.

The superiority of this theory to its predecessors consists principally in its accounting for both the energy and the constancy of the solar radiation. A liquid sun would soon be covered with a crust. Sir William Herschell's sun, the sun accepted for the last twenty or thirty years, with a luminous envelope and a solid kernel, would not suffice a single day for its enormous expenditure by radiation. And as there are millions of similar stars in the heavens, we may believe that such beautiful phenomena depend on the simplest and most general laws of nature, and not on any artifice or trick like those which our poor imagination suggests.

Both the Intensity and the Constancy of the Solar Radiation call for the inquirer's special attention. The Intensity was measured by Monsieur Pouillet, in 1838, by means of a very simple apparatus. The result was that, allowing for absorption of heat by our atmosphere, the Sun's heat normally received on a square metre (something more than a yard), at the distance of the Earth from the Sun, would suffice to boil a litre (say a quart) of water in less than six minutes. This result led several engineers—Ericsson, for instance—to speculate on the employment of the solar heat as a motive power. But suppose the square metre advanced to the actual surface of the Sun, it is demonstrated by calculation that the radiation received there,

per second, by each square metre, represents, converted into force, the power of seventy-seven thousand horses. The total radiation from the Sun per second is easily obtained by remembering that the Sun's surface is twelve thousand times that of the Earth, that the Earth's surface contains five hundred and ten millions of millions of square metres. Such is the overwhelming amount of energy which the solar radiation every instant shoots forth, pours, and disperses into space.

The Constancy of the radiation now claims our attention.

We may affirm, speaking generally, that the temperature of the Earth (which depends almost exclusively on the solar radiation, in consequence of the slight conducting power of the terrestrial crust) has not undergone any notable change since the most remote geological ages. In fact, except at the very beginning, the Earth has always been covered by vegetables and inhabited by animals, more or less highly organised.

Now, in the immense scale of temperatures which comprise all possible phenomena, vegetable and animal life are restricted within the narrow interval of a few degrees. The solar radiation, therefore, cannot have varied, since the most remote geological ages—that is, for millions of years—beyond the trifling quantity comprised between those limits. The more recent historical period helps us to still more precise results. Learned botanists, who have studied the present geographical distribution of the most delicate plants at the extreme range of their actual habitat, assure us that the mean temperature of several determinate regions of the globe cannot have sensibly varied for the last two or three thousand years.

These notions, a partial summary of Monsieur Faye's learned and lengthy essay, *Sur la Constitution Physique du Soleil*, would make the Sun a consequence of the original nebulous phase which Laplace takes as the starting-point of his history of the solar system. But they also foreshadow the Sun's progress up to final extinction—as far as shining is concerned—of which sundry lost stars, the planets, and the terrestrial globe, are instances. Such would be the complete evolution of the immense masses of matter, which little by little dissipate their energies in space, by their radiation of light and heat.

This theory propounds, not as near, but as inevitable, the end of the blazing Sun

himself, who, after steadily shining for incalculable ages, will finally cease to light and warm us—will, in short, go out. When the internal circulation which feeds the photosphere and regulates its radiation shall first slacken and eventually stop, animal and vegetable life (which for some time past will have crowded and been restricted to the neighbourhood of the equator), will entirely disappear from off the globe. Reduced to the feeble radiation from the stars, the earth will be wrapped in the chill and the twilight of interstellar space. The continual movements of the atmosphere will give place to absolute calm. From the last clouds, the last showers will have fallen. The brooks and rivers will conduct no longer to the sea the waters which, continually, were again drawn from it by solar radiation. The ocean itself, frozen into a solid mass, will refuse to obey the laws of the tides. The only light of her own the Earth will enjoy, will proceed from shooting stars, still continuing to enter and take fire in our atmosphere.

Perhaps, the alternations observed in stars at the commencement of their decline, will occur in the Sun. Perhaps the development of heat occasioned by some falling-in of the solar mass, will cause him to flare up, for a brief interval, with an outburst of his ancient splendour; but he will soon grow once more dark and dim—like the famous stars of the Swan, the Serpentarius, and, still more recently, the Crown. The rest of our little system, planets and comets, will share the Earth's lot, continuing, nevertheless, to revolve, with her, in the dark, round the extinguished Sun. Only, the Sun having lost his repulsive force, the comets will also have lost their tails.

Such—for him who sees in the Universe brute force and matter only—such is the destiny which awaits us; a possible new heavens and a new earth; that earth perhaps the Sun, revolving as a planet round some still non-existent sun: a conclusion certainly less cheerful, although perhaps more logical than the theory of the incorruptibility and unchangeability of the starry firmament.

But if, shrinking back from this ghastly perspective, we revert to the actual condition of the Earth, so marvellously vivified by the Sun, we cannot sufficiently admire the harmonious simplicity of the means which the Great Author of all things has brought into play, to produce around us, as Kepler said, movement and life, order

and beauty. And He who has gifted us now with movement and life, order and beauty, will be able to reproduce them at His will.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XL. SUSPENSE.

It will have been noticed what a singular change has come over the band of persons who are now engaged in hunting down poor Doughty and his treasure, and who, when seen at the little musical party with which this story began, were a group of ladies and gentlemen of the average kind, harmless and indifferent, and in some degree good-natured. By a gradual descent we now find these decent persons with eager, jealous eyes, hungering after gold, all engaged in this excited and unscrupulous pursuit, and ready to go to almost any lengths in the ardour of their unholy greed. Their strained and restless eyes watched each other with a jealous fury. They were all restless, perpetually going out into the streets with no defined view, or hovering near the premises where this expected treasure was, occasionally encountering each other very awkwardly, and each making off with a guilty air, as though they had only accidentally been passing that way.

Thus Will Gardiner would hardly have been recognised by any former friend who had known him as a hearty, boisterous, welcome-giving fellow, that seized on people violently, and carried them home to dinner to be deafened by his boisterous laughter. The affectionate father, who wearied people with praises of his girl, the tolerant husband, the good-natured friend—all were gone. In their place there was now a silent and restless being, inclined to be captious and even quarrelsome, while in his eyes was to be read an unholy eagerness and expectancy. It was unfortunate, too, that at this time should have come pressure from debts, in which his lavish hospitality had involved him. It was noticed that Parkinson, the manager of the West of England Branch Bank at Brickford, was a frequent guest at the Will Gardiner dinners, and that often Will Gardiner broke out into the loudest and most boisterous praise of this gentleman's manners and heart. He was one of the best fellows breathing, a real honest, down-

right, straightforward, English man of business. And it was not unreasonable to assume that these enthusiastic spasms followed close on some indulgent "renewal" which had been transacted that day at the bank. Yet in these latter days it was remarked that Will Gardiner, going about moody and dark-browed, had relaxed in his praises, and on one or two occasions had burst out into angry condemnation of his admired friend and of his system. He was ruining the bank. It was a wonder that the other banks had not enterprise enough to start a new branch. There was plenty of room. The griping and scraping system was old-fashioned, and if some new concern were started on a really liberal system they would take the wind out of the sails of the present establishment. In short, it had long been suspected that Will Gardiner had been going too fast, and in a place like Brickford suspicion was knowledge, and knowledge was next to certainty. His lady, too, the agreeable, managing Mrs. Gardiner, showed symptoms of the same ugly influence. Her face had grown pinched, her voice more tart, and she dealt forth her customary ill-natured speeches with more than usual sharpness of barb. Between her and the good-natured, complacent husband, unusual scenes of altercation and reproach took place. But there was an agreement in one point that "something must be done," and that very quickly, or the card house in which they were living would come toppling down about their ears.

Of Lady Duke's condition we have already spoken. She herself was pressed and harassed a good deal by the same forces. But with people of fashion, and "of a certain position," and who have some sort of an estate, the billows of pecuniary distress are slow in rising, and may beat for years against the stone breakwater without serious damage. It is very different with the professional man in the rising town, who is living "in a good style," which too often signifies "beyond his means." There a catastrophe often comes with appalling rapidity. Lady Duke had therefore a good deal of breathing time before her. But on the other hand she felt that unless she acted promptly and speedily, her competitors would be beforehand with her.

Finally, there was Doctor Spooner. He was a mere adventurer without a shilling, but hoping to "get on." All, therefore, who were engaged in this rather exciting

contest were pretty much upon a level as regards the pressure that was urging them on to speedy action. Lady Duke felt, then, that she must lead if they were to win at all. The Gardiners had the same impression too, and were constrained to admit that, without her they would have no *locus standi*; but Will was too proud to enter into a direct alliance with her. Indeed, Mrs. Gardiner was so defiant and so confident in her own talents that she felt quite disinclined to share the spoils of victory. She had bitter suspicions of Lady Duke, and believed that her "game" was to secure the whole for herself, taking possession of the unhappy Doughty, and stripping him of everything, whether he were dead or alive, sane or mad. They were more nearly related to the patient than were the Dukes, and Mr. Gardiner's position as a barrister and judge, seemed to mark him out as the suitable person to have charge of the matter.

The husband and wife had many strange conferences on this head, he hanging back with a not unnatural scrupulousness, the lady urging him forward with arguments and taunts, somewhat after the model of those used by Lady Macbeth on a more formidable occasion. What was he afraid of; was it not only their duty after all? Rather, would he not do well to be afraid of the terrible pressure of the invasion of creditors whose proceedings he was now staving off with such difficulty, and who would presently, no doubt, resort to extreme measures. This appeal never failed with Will Gardiner, and his next question was to ask what they were to do.

Mrs. Gardiner had the whole mapped out clearly, and gave her programme in the sharpest and most distinct manner. They must be bold, fearless, and act entirely for themselves. There must be no throwing in their lot with any one else, and no compromising or weak delicacy. The only way was to strike boldly—take up a line of open hostility, force themselves in, and let the citadel fall to the strongest. They were the strongest. He was a man—a barrister—a person of position—opposed to whom were feeble women, and creatures like Nagle and Spooner. There was, of course, the chief difficulty, which was the patient himself; but with him, the same course must be pursued, a summary assault and capture, with a firm holding of the ground.

These suggestions were artfully pressed, not all at once, but on various occasions,

and at many a nightly council. Still he resisted.

"I don't like this work," he said; "it's dirty work, and I am ashamed of myself at the very idea."

"At what?" would say his wife, impatiently. "We are doing no more than what is always done in these cases. It is most painful and disagreeable, but that can't be helped. You must strike boldly and bear down all opposition with a high hand; or else be borne down yourself. You must think of your wife and children. Should it not of right come to us? I have no patience with the selfish, greedy old fellow whining over his loves, and neglecting his real relations who have a claim on him!"

This rough-and-ready way of putting the matter made due impression on Will Gardiner, who felt there was a certain cruel logic at the bottom of it—the logic that something must be done, and done very speedily. Even as he looked at the handsome furniture, the most substantial and tasteful in Brickford, another argument was addressed to him; for the ugly claws of an odious and spectral octopus seemed to be sprawling over it, holding the cabinets, mirrors, couches, &c., in a fast clutch. This octopus was a BILL OF SALE which some time before he had been obliged to give to that Mr. Parkinson, the manager of the bank, in return for certain necessary advances, and in reference to which he had been receiving many necessary reminders.

"After all," he said to himself, "if we do not do something he will fall into the fangs of that harpy Duke, who would not mind killing the poor fellow, so that she got hold of the spoil." This charitable view determined him, and he made up his mind to act.

CHAPTER XLI. THE BIRKENSHAWs.

LADY DUKE had also made up her mind to act, and did not lose a moment in carrying out her plans. She had written to her husband to come down at once, believing that his presence with the "K.C.B." adornments, his military, almost magisterial presence, would lend a weight to the proceedings. He had already arrived, though his presence was not known to the town of Brickford. She was careful not to tell him more of her proposed business than that it was a most painful matter, and that they were compelled to interfere in the interests of the poor victim himself,

who would otherwise become the prey of a gang of designing persons. For Sir George Duke, notoriously subservient as he was to his lady's behests, was a gentleman of strict honour, who would not engage himself in any "dirty" business of the kind for all the wealth of the world. It was presented to him, therefore, as a sort of Samaritan office, which would of course be for the interest of the family, though this was merely incidental.

Mr. Birkenshaw, as we have seen, was a solicitor, and a new solicitor, who, like so many other professional gentlemen, had come to settle in Brickford. He was a hard-faced young man, and was known to be poor and struggling. It was, however, admitted that he came of a tolerably good family, but had "disgraced himself" in the eyes of the community by running off with a shopkeeper's daughter, whom he believed to have plenty of money in her own right; but who proved to be "in the power of her father," as the phrase runs. This disastrous mistake was fatal to his prospects at Brickford, for the community could not pass over the double failure. Had he secured the fortune, his success would have gone a good way towards condoning the low character of the alliance. The girl, who expected to "be made a lady of," was deeply mortified at this neglect, which no less affected her husband. He was indeed disgusted with the place, and thinking of setting out for Australia, or some colony where there would be an opening for his talents, and where there are no such baleful impediments to a man's success, when he was sent for to draw Mr. Doughty's will. This seemed like the breaking of the clouds. Very astute and far-seeing, he at once took in the whole situation at a glance; the opposing interests, the contention of the various parties, and the bitter struggle that was going on round the sick man's bed. Here was a case which he had often longed for as giving a scope to his talents which no humdrum professional business would offer in a twelve-month. Doctor Spooner had led him to believe that it was by his interest that he had been introduced, but he very soon discovered from Mr. Doughty that he owed his introduction to that gentleman himself. Mr. Doughty was likely to be interested by the hardship of the case, and the disqualification which the intolerant of Brickford so unfairly laid upon a struggling man. The solicitor, therefore, resented the pretence of patronage which had been put

forward, and felt himself discharged from all obligation of supporting his introducer.

The shopkeeper's daughter was pining in a sort of discontent, bitterly disappointed at her exclusion from the high society of Brickford, which she had made sure of entering. She heard of all the entertainments that were going on, and looked wistfully from afar off in despair at her exclusion. Her husband, too, who felt that he had been dragged down from his former position, was bitterly aggrieved by this neglect, and eager to be revenged on the Brickfordians for their slights. She gave her husband many weary hours owing to her complaints and repinings at this treatment, and was never weary making attempts of a secret and roundabout character to acquire "her proper position in society." But the ladies of Brickford were resolute, and indeed took a pride in keeping this person in her proper place.

Mr. Birkenshaw was in his office waiting for clients, who, when they did present themselves, were of a needy class. He was for the hundredth time execrating the miserable opportunities the place offered to a man of his genius, when he saw, through the blind, a carriage drive up to the door. Here, at last, was an opportunity; from the window above, his wife had also seen the arrival, and hailed it with a pleased flutter. She knew it was Lady Duke's carriage, and saw that personage descend in all her state. She could not hope that this visit had anything to do with recognition of herself; but still it might be the beginning of some relation, and she watched nervously.

Mr. Birkenshaw received his visitor with all respect. She had come on a matter of business, and to ask Mr. Birkenshaw's professional aid. Her son had run up some bills at Brickford, and the tradesman had made some extortionate charges. There were besides a dealing or two with some money-lenders, which might have been in regular course; but she felt herself—a poor woman—wholly unfitted to deal with them. Would Mr. Birkenshaw see these people and make some sort of arrangement?

This was really the state of affairs, but hitherto she had not been specially anxious to accommodate these creditors, who, she considered, should wait like other people. It was Alfred's own affair, and if he chose to run in debt he must deal with his creditors himself, and settle with them as best he could.

Mr. Birkenshaw would be delighted to undertake the task. After business details had been despatched, Lady Duke gave utterance to these memorable and delightful words:

"I have been very remiss in calling on Mrs. Birkenshaw; but that is a pleasure I have long intended. Perhaps," this with a gracious courtesy, "I might be so fortunate as to find her at home now?"

The solicitor's face flushed with pleasure, he leaped up and begged she would excuse him for a moment; then flew up-stairs with the welcome news to his wife, giving her warning to prepare a hasty toilet in honour of the event. Right joyfully and speedily did she set about the task, and in a few moments he was ushering up the great lady into the modest drawing-room.

Lady Duke, as we have seen, was a woman of the world, and knew how to avoid being patronising when she meant to be gracious. She was most agreeable, hinted at her own private influence in Brickford, and said there were numbers of her friends who would be delighted to know Mrs. Birkenshaw. Then she turned the conversation on the prevailing topic of the moment. This was adroit; for she had taken care not to make a single allusion to the matter—in the office. Business in the drawing-room loses the official air of business.

"It is a most unhappy state of things," she said, "and his state is growing really pitiable. Fancy a poor helpless creature left as prey to adventurers, who only want to despoil him of all he has."

"Oh, it is dreadful! shocking!" said the lady, who from henceforth was to agree with every sentiment of her august visitor.

"Yes," said her husband. "And they seem to have succeeded. For it is no secret in this place how he has disposed of his vast wealth. I prepared his will, and have been told by every one I met his exact disposition. It is no use my preserving any professional reserve in the matter."

"But you have heard what has happened since? That will no longer exist."

Mr. Birkenshaw coloured a little, as though this had been some slight to his handiwork.

"No longer exists? What has he done?"

"It is said," said Lady Duke, stooping forward, and speaking in a low, earnest

voice, "that in some paroxysm of fury, or paroxysm of some kind—this is the story—that he fell upon the paper, and tore it into fragments. Latterly, certainly, he has grown very strange."

"This is curious news. I was expecting every day to hear from him, and have the deed executed regularly," said the solicitor, with some vexation, for he had intended working the case up into a substantial and satisfactory job. "He was certainly sensible and rational enough when giving me his instructions; but this sudden proceeding certainly seems strange. Then he has thrown over the Nagles?"

"Completely. But there is a more extraordinary story still, which I think I ought to tell you; but I shall do so down stairs in your sanctum. For this is meant as a visit to Mrs. Birkenshaw," added she, bowing sweetly, "and we must not be talking business in her drawing-room."

Immensely gratified at this compliment, the solicitor's wife could only smile and bow, and was so delighted that she did not perceive that her august visitor confined herself to the compliment, and promptly rose to go down to the office for the business matters she had alluded to. Lady Duke was at once on the most confidential terms with the lawyer.

"Should not something be done in the matter?" she said. "It is getting very serious. There can be no doubt—if what we heard be true—that he has taken up some strange delusions. I think it must be a sort of misapprehension, but it is stated on excellent and undoubted authority, that he has declared that he will found an hospital for cats and dogs. Of course this is exaggerated. But he should be seen by proper medical authority, who should pronounce on his state."

Mr. Birkenshaw was growing interested, and made the very remark that she was inviting.

"But his nearest relations should look after him. He should not be left a prey to these Spooners and Nagles. You know who are the most nearly connected with him, of course."

"Oh, we are, beyond question," said she; "but you see there is a great delicacy in taking any step. I have tried, I frankly

confess, to give him advice—to make my way in; but really there have been such scenes—such indecent scenes—what with putting obstacles in the way, and almost barricading the door, that no lady could expose herself to——"

All at once the lawyer saw the situation. Up to that moment he had been, as it were, dazzled by the surprise of the visit, and the anticipated pleasure to be found in the new acquaintance. Lady Duke had, besides, led up to the matter in such a natural way that he had not perceived the nature of the business that had really brought her. Now it was all revealed, and Lady Duke saw by his face, with some awkwardness, that he understood.

"Do you wish me to act for you, to advise you, to assist you?" he said, bluntly and coldly, for he was amazed to discover the motive of Lady Duke's attention to his wife. "Do you want to assert your place beside the patient, and take the whole control?"

"Oh, dear no!" said Lady Duke, confused. "I spoke merely out of humanity. I should not like to see a poor helpless being made a victim of——"

"Except by those who are properly entitled to do it, I mean," he added, hastily; "protected by those who have the right to protect him. You think that you have the right; the Gardiners that they have as strong a right. The Nagles have pronounced ideas on the same subject. In short, it is a task that requires boldness and tact, and the satisfaction of saving this poor being from being the prey of harpies is likely to be won only by those who show skill and tact. Suppose," continued Mr. Birkenshaw, rising, "we go into my confidential room, and consider this matter more in detail."

After a short pause Lady Duke followed him into the confidential room, where they remained more than half an hour. What was arranged there was not known even to the wife of Mr. Birkenshaw's bosom, but it was something more important than arrangements for future visitings and agreeable intimacy.

NOTICE.—The third of the series of articles, "*Famous British Regiments*," will appear next week.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 229. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BORN AND THE BORN."

CHAPTER LXI. A DISCOVERY.

I STARTED to my feet, and was going to meet him, but he raised his hand, as I fancied to warn me that some one was coming. So I stopped short, and he approached.

"I shall be very busy for two or three days, dear Ethel; and," what he added was spoken very slowly, and dropped word by word, "you are such a rogue!"

I was very much astonished. Neither his voice nor look was playful. His face at the moment wore about the most disagreeable expression which human face can wear. That of a smile, not a genuine, but a pretended smile, which, at the same time, the person who smiles affects to try to suppress. To me it looks cruel, cynical, mean. I was so amazed, as he looked in my eyes, with this cunning, shabby smile, that I could not say a word, and stood stock-still looking in return, in stupid wonder, in his face.

At length I broke out, very pale, for I was shocked, "I can't understand! What is it? Oh, Richard, what can you mean?"

"Now don't be a little fool. I really believe you are going to cry. You are a great deal too clever, you lovely little rogue, to fancy that a girl's tears ever yet did any good. Listen to me; come!"

He walked away, still smiling that insulting smile, and he took my hand in his, and shook his finger at me, with the same cynical affectation of the playful. "What do I mean?"

"Yes, what can you mean?" I stamped the emphasis on the floor, with tears in my eyes. "It is cruel, it is horrible, after our long separation."

"Well, I'll tell you what I mean," he said, and for a moment the smile almost degenerated to a sneer. "Look here; come to the window."

I faltered; I accompanied him to it, looking in his face in an agony of alarm and surprise. It seemed to me like the situation of a horrid dream.

"Do you know how I amused myself during the last twenty miles of my railway journey?" he said. "Well, I'll tell you; I was reading all that time a curious criminal trial, in which a most respectable old gentleman, aged sixty-seven, has just been convicted of having poisoned a poor girl forty years ago, and is to be hanged for it before three weeks!"

"Well?" said I, with an effort—I should not have known my own voice, and I felt a great ball in my throat.

"Well?" he repeated; "don't you see?"

He paused with the same horrid smile; this time, in the silence, he laughed a little; it was no use trying to hide from myself the fact that I dimly suspected what he was driving at. I should have liked to die that moment before he had time to complete another sentence.

"Now, you see, the misfortune of that sort of thing is that time neither heals nor hides the offence. There is a principle of law which says that no lapse of time bars the Crown. But I see this kind of conversation bores you."

I was near saying something very wild and foolish, but I did not.

"I won't keep you a moment," said he; "just come a little nearer the window; I want you to look at something that may interest you."

I did go a little nearer. I was moving as he commanded, as if I had been mesmerised.

"You lost," he continued, "shortly be-

fore your illness, the only photograph you possessed of your sister Helen? But why are you so put out by it? Why should you tremble so violently? It is only I, you know; you need not mind. You dropped that on the floor of a jeweller's shop one night, when I and Droqville happened to be there together, and I picked it up; it represents you both together. I want to restore it; here it is."

I extended my hand to take it. I don't know whether I spoke, but the portrait faded suddenly from my sight, and darkness covered everything. I heard his voice, like that of a person talking in excitement, a long way off, at the other side of a wall in another room; it was no more than a hum, and even that was growing fainter.

I forgot everything, in utter unconsciousness, for some seconds.

When I opened my eyes, water was trickling down my face and forehead, and the window was open.

I sighed deeply. I saw him looking over me with a countenance of gloom and anxiety. In happy forgetfulness of all that had passed, I smiled and said:

"Oh, Richard! Thank God!" and stretched my arms to him.

"That's right—quite right," he said; "you may have every confidence in me."

The dreadful recollection began to return.

"Don't get up yet," he said, earnestly, and even tenderly; "you're not equal to it. Don't think of leaving me; you must have confidence in me; why didn't you trust me long ago—trust me altogether. Fear nothing while I am near you."

So he continued speaking until my recollection had quite returned.

"Why, darling, will you not trust me? Can you be surprised at my being wounded by your reserve? How have I deserved it? Forget the pain of this discovery, and remember only that against all the world to the last hour of my life, with my last thought, the last drop of my blood, I am your defender."

He kissed my hands passionately; he drew me towards him, and kissed my lips. He murmured caresses and vows of unalterable love—nothing could be more tender and impassioned. I was relieved by a passionate burst of tears.

"It's over now," he said; "it's all over; you'll forgive me, won't you? I have more to forgive, darling, than you; the hardest of all things to forgive in one whom we idolise—a want of confidence in us. You ought to have told me all this before."

I told him, as well as I could between my sobs, that there was no need to tell any one of a madness which had nothing to do with waking thoughts or wishes, and was simply the extravagance of delirium—that I was then actually in fever, had been at the point of death, and that Mr. Carmel knew everything about it.

"Well, darling," he said, "you must trouble your mind no more. Of course you are not accountable for it. If people in brain fever were not carefully watched and restrained, a day would not pass without some tragedy. But what care I, Ethel, if it had been a real crime of passion? Nothing. Do you fancy it would or could, for an instant, have shaken my desperate love for you? Don't you remember Moore's lines:

I ask not, I care not, if guilt's in thy heart;
I but know that thou lov'st me, whatever thou art.

That is my feeling, fixed as adamant; never suspect me. I can't, I never can, tell you how I felt your suspicion of my love; how cruel I thought it. What had I done to deserve it? There, darling, take this; it is yours." He kissed the little photograph, he placed it in my hand, he kissed me again fervently. "Look here, Ethel, I came all this way, ever so much out of my way, to see you. I made an excuse of paying the vicar a visit on business; my real business was to see you. I must be this evening at Wrexham, but I shall be here again to-morrow as early as possible. I am a mere slave at present, and business hurries me from point to point; but cost what it may, I shall be with you some time in the afternoon to-morrow."

"To stay?" I asked.

He smiled, and shook his head.

"I can't say that, darling," he said; he was going towards the door.

"But you'll be here early to-morrow; do you think before two?"

"No, not before two, I am afraid I may be delayed, and it is a long way; but you may look out for me early in the evening."

Then came a leave-taking. He would not let me come with him to the hall-door; there were servants there, and I looked so ill. I stood at the window and saw him drive away.

You may suppose I did feel miserable. I think I was near fainting again when he was gone.

In a little time I was sufficiently recovered to get up to my room, and there I rang for Rebecca Torkill

I don't know how that long evening went by. The night came, and a miserable nervous night I passed, starting in frightful dreams from the short dozes I was able to snatch.

CHAPTER LXII. SIR HARRY WITHDRAWS.

NEXT morning, when the grey light came, I was neither glad nor sorry. The shock of my yesterday's interview with the only man on earth I loved, remained. It was a shock, I think, never to be quite recovered. I got up and dressed early. How ill and strangely I looked out of the glass in my own face!

I did not go down. I remained in my room, loitering over the hours that were to pass, before the arrival of Richard.

I was haunted by his changed face. I tried to fix in my recollection the earnest look of love on which my eyes had opened from my swoon. But the other would take its place, and remain; and I could not get rid of the startled pain of my heart. I was haunted now, as I had been ever since that scene had taken place, with a vague misgiving of something dreadful going to happen.

I think it was between four and five in the evening that Rebecca Torkill came in, looking pale and excited.

"Oh, Miss Ethel, dear, what do you think has happened?" she said, lifting up both hands and eyes so soon as she was in at the door.

"Good Heaven, Rebecca!" I said, starting up; "is it anything bad?"

I was on the point of saying "anything about Mr. Marston?"

"Oh, miss! what do you think? Poor Sir Harry Rokestone is dead."

"Sir Harry dead!" I exclaimed.

"Dead, indeed, miss," said Rebecca. "Thomas Byres is just come up from the vicar's, and he's had a letter from Mr. Blount this morning, and the vicar's bin down at the church with Dick Mattox, the sexton, giving him directions about the vault. Little thought I, when I saw him going away—a fine man he was, six feet two, Adam Bell says, in his boots—little thought I, when I saw him walk down the steps, so tall and hearty, he'd be coming back so soon in his coffin, poor gentleman. But, miss, they say dead folk's past feeling, and what does it all matter now? One man's breath is another man's death. And so the world goes on, and all forgot before long.

To the grave with the dead,
And the quick to the bread.

A rough gentleman he was, but kind; the tenants will be all sorry. They're all talking, the servants, down-stairs. He was one that liked to see his tenants and his poor comfortable."

All this and a great deal more Rebecca discoursed.

I could hardly believe her news. A letter, I thought, would have been sure to reach Dorracleugh, as soon as the vicar's house, at least.

Possibly this dismaying news would turn out to be mere rumour, I thought, and end in nothing worse than a sharp attack of gout in London. Surely we should have heard of his illness before it came to such a catastrophe. Nevertheless, I had to tear up my first note to the vicar; I was so flurried, and it was so full of blunders; and I was obliged to write another.

It was simply to entreat information in this horrible uncertainty, which had for the time superseded all my other troubles.

A mounted messenger was despatched forthwith to the vicar's house.

But we soon found that the rumour was everywhere, for people were arriving from all quarters to inquire at the house.

It was, it is true, so far as we could learn, mere report; but its being in so many places was worse than ominous.

The messenger had not been gone ten minutes, when Richard Marston arrived. From my room I saw the chaise come to the hall-door, and I ran down at once to the drawing-room.

Richard had arrived half an hour before his time. He entered the room from the other door as I came in, and met me eagerly, looking tired and anxious, but very lovingly. Not a trace of the Richard whose smile had horrified me the day before.

Almost my first question to him was whether he had heard any such rumour.

He was holding my hand in his as I asked the question; he laid his other on it, and looked sadly in my eyes, as he answered, "It is only too true. I have lost the best friend that man ever had."

I was too much startled to speak for some seconds, then I burst into tears.

"No, no," he said, in answer to something I had said. "It is only too certain—there can be no doubt; look at this."

He took a telegraph paper from his pocket and showed it to me. It was from "Lemuel Blount, London."

It announced the news in the usual shocking laconics, and said, "I write to you to Dykham."

"I shall get the letter this evening when I reach Dykham, and I'll tell you all that is in it to-morrow. The telegraph message had reached me yesterday, when I saw you, but I could not bear to tell you the dreadful news until I had confirmation, and that has come. The vicar has had a message, about which there can be no mistake. And now, darling, put on your things, and come out for a little walk; I have ever so many things to talk to you about."

Here was a new revolution in my troubled history. More or less of the horror of uncertainty again encompassed my future years. But grief, quite unselfish, predominated in my agitation. I had lost a benefactor. His kind face was before me, and the voice, always subdued to tenderness when he spoke to me, was in my ear. I was grieved to the heart.

I got on my hat and jacket, and with a heavy heart went out with Richard.

For many reasons the most secluded path was that best suited for our walk. Richard Marston had just told the servants the substance of the message he had received that morning from Mr. Blount, so that they could have no difficulty about answering inquiries at the hall-door.

We soon found ourselves in the path that had witnessed so many of our meetings. I wondered what Richard intended talking about. He had been silent and thoughtful. He hardly uttered a word during our walk, until we had reached what I may call our trysting-tree, the grand old beech-tree, under which a huge log of timber, roughly squared, formed a seat.

Though little disposed myself to speak, his silence alarmed me.

"Ethel, darling," he said, suddenly, "have you formed any plans for the future?"

"Plans!" I echoed. "I don't know—what do you mean, Richard?"

"I mean," he continued, sadly, "have you considered how this misfortune may affect us? Did Sir Harry ever tell you anything about his intentions—I mean what he thought of doing by his will? Don't look so scared, darling," he added, with a melancholy smile; "you will see just now what my reasons are. You can't suppose that a sordid thought ever entered my mind."

I was relieved.

"No; he never said a word to me about his will, except what I told you," I answered.

"Because the people who knew him at Wrexham are talking. Suppose he has

cut me off and provided for you, could I any longer in honour hold you to an engagement, to fulfil which I could contribute nothing?"

"Oh, Richard, darling, how can you talk so? Don't you know, whatever I possess on earth is yours."

"Then my little woman refuses to give me up, even if there were difficulties?" he said, pressing my hands, and smiling down upon my face in a kind of rapture.

"I could not give you up, Richard—you know I couldn't," I answered.

"My darling!" he exclaimed, softly, looking down upon me still, with the same smile.

"Richard, how could you ever have dreamed such a thing? You don't know how you wound me."

"I never thought it, I never believed it, darling. I knew it was impossible; whatever difficulties might come between us, I knew that I could not live without you; and I thought you loved me as well. Nothing then shall part us—nothing. Don't you say so? Say it, Ethel. I swear it, nothing."

I gave him the promise; it was but repeating what I had often said before. Never was vow uttered from a more willing heart.

Even now I am sure he admired me, and, after his manner, loved me with a vehement passion.

"But there are other people, Ethel," he resumed, "who think that I shall be very well off, who think that I shall inherit all my uncle's great fortune. But all may not go smoothly, you see; there may be great difficulties. Promise me, swear it once more, that you will suffer no obstacles to separate us. That we shall be united be they what they may; that you will never, so help you Heaven, forsake me or marry another."

I did repeat the promise.

We walked towards home; I wondering what special difficulty he could be thinking of now; but, restrained by a kind of fear, I did not ask him.

"I'm obliged to go away again, immediately," said he, after another short silence; "but my business will be over to-night, and I shall be here again in the morning, and then I shall be my own master for a time, and have a quiet day or two, and be able to open my heart to you, Ethel."

We walked on again in silence. Suddenly he stopped, laying his hand on my shoulder, and looking sharply into my face, said:

"I'll leave you here; it is time, Ethel, that I should be off." He held my hand in his, and his eyes were fixed steadily upon mine. "Look here," he said, after another pause, "I must make a bitter confession, Ethel; you know me with all my faults; I have no principle of calculation in me; equity and all that sort of thing, would stand a poor chance with me, against passion; I am all passion; it has been my undoing, and will yet I hope," and he looked on me with a wild glow in his dark eyes, "be the making of me, Ethel. No obstacles shall separate us, you have sworn; and mind, Ethel, I'm a fellow that never forgives; and as Heaven is my judge, if you give me up, I'll not forgive you. But that will never be. God bless you, darling; you shall see me early to-morrow. Go you in that direction; let us keep our secret a day or two longer. You look as if you thought me mad; I'm not that; though I sometimes half think so myself. There has been enough in my life to make a steadier brain than mine crazy. Good-bye, Ethel, darling, till to-morrow. God bless you."

With these words he left me. His reckless language had plainly a meaning in it. My heart sank, as I thought on the misfortune that had reduced me again to uncertainty, and perhaps to a miserable dependence. It was by no means impossible that nothing had been provided for either him or me by Sir Harry Rokestone. Men, prompt and accurate in everything else, so often go on postponing a will until "the door is shut to," and the hour passed for ever. It was horrible allowing such thoughts to intrude; but Richard's conversation was so full of the subject, and my position was so critical and dependent, that it did recur, not with sordid hopes, but in the form of a great and reasonable fear.

When Richard was out of sight, as he quickly was among the trees, I turned back, and sitting myself down again, on the rude bench, under our own beech-tree, I had a long and bitter cry all to myself.

PERFUMES.

No taste is more general than that for perfumes; and in the earliest times, and among the rudest nations, we find the use of sweet scents as part of the means whereby the daily life of man is beautified, and the dread deities in heaven adored. The Egyptian priest, taking him as the oldest example of whom we know anything, was

anointing them with sweet unguents, when he wished to deprecate their wrath or obtain their favour. In a certain poem which was engraven on the walls of Karnak, and which Monsieur Rougé has translated, Ramses II. prayed the god Ammon to give him the victory over his enemies, by reminding him half coaxingly: "Have I not celebrated thee by many and splendid feasts? have I not filled thy house with my booty? I have enriched thy domain, and sacrificed to thee three thousand oxen, with all manner of sweet-smelling herbs and the best perfumes." And in the tremendous solemnity of the Finding of Osiris, the symbol of the recovered god was made of clay strongly scented with aromatics, moistened with the water out of the golden vase that had been carried in gorgeous procession through the streets. The divine bull-god, Apis, was also worshipped with perfumed oblations. Incense was burnt before his altar, and his lamps were filled with scented oil by those who wished to consult him as an oracle; while to the sun-god Rê were offered three kinds of incense—aromatic gums at dawn, myrrh at noon, and a mixture of six ingredients at sunset.

All the gods had each his share in turn. To Isis, an ox filled with camphor, incense, and aromatic herbs, was a favourite sacrifice when burnt on her altars plentifully be-sprinkled with perfumed oil. Horus her dear son; Anubis the god of the dead, dog-headed; Thoth the Egyptian Hermes, the inventor of letters and chemistry; Neith the goddess of wisdom; Pasht the lion-headed; the sacred ibis and the hawk-headed god; these and all the other deities received liberal oblations of sweet scents, such as perfumed oil, aromatic herbs, odoriferous gums, and woods for burnt incense. And even the dead were not forgotten. Before their statues the mourning relatives—represented by the priests—poured out fine perfumed oil for oblation, or burnt sweet herbs for incense, or offered pots of scented ointment; which last also they buried with them for their use in the unknown land whither they were going; men not having come yet to the knowledge of the intangibility of the spirit world. Though indeed, we can hardly say that, when we have grave scientific men who give in their adhesion to the physical marvels wrought by mediums and their familiars.

Egypt was evidently the great mart for scents and perfumes in those early days. When Joseph was carried down thither, it

came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt." Indeed the whole life of the old Nile land, both religious and social, was largely interpreted by the love and use of perfumes. Not only were the gods fed and worshipped with sweet-smelling offerings, but guests were received in chambers strewn with flowers, and, so soon as they came in, were waited on by slaves who poured a delightful stream of fragrant essence over their heads, and hung garlands of lotus, crocus, and saffron flowers about their necks; while odoriferous gums were flung into the little perfume vases where the pastilles of the period were burning. Women made themselves beautiful to sight and delicious to sense by fresh flowers and refined essences; magicians troubled the wits of their dupes by clouds of heady vapours, luscious and oppressive; and, as the last scene of all, the poor pale corpse was transformed into a desiccated and perpetuated mummy by the process of embalming, in which aromatics played the principal part.

What was true of the Egyptians was equally so of the Jews. With them the love of perfumes held quite as large a place as that love of gold and precious stones for which they have been always famous. Judea was rich in odoriferous flowers and aromatic plants. The mountains of Gilead were covered with the amyris, the bush whence was distilled the famous balm of Gilead, or balm of Judea, so common once, so rare to-day that the Sultan alone can be supplied. The roses of Damascus were as plentiful in the days when Solomon wrote his Song as they are now when their essence has become one of the characteristic trades of the East; cinnamon; galbanum, whatever that may be—a perfume however, expressly reserved for religious rites and forbidden the laity; the cypress-tree (*lawsonia inermis*) with its sweet-scented golden flowers; nard, said by some to be a valerian (*valeriana jatamansi*), by others an andropogon (*andropogon nardus*); saffron, or the crocus sativus; the calamus aromaticus, a sweet-scented reed of the same family as that famous stick in which the two monks brought the eggs of the silkworm from China to Europe; the resinous gum of the *boswellia thurifer*, sometimes called the *olibanum* tree; the aloe, or *aloexylum agallochum*, the aromatic wood of which forms the principal ingredient in the scented sticks burnt by the Chinese and Hindoos in their temples, and which is by no means the aloe of commerce and the chemist's shop; these

seem to have been the principal sources of Hebrew perfumes. But what "stacte" and "onycha" and "galbanum," may really mean, not even the most learned have been able yet to determine satisfactorily. Setting aside then, an absolutely accurate translation, we have some idea of what Jewish perfumes, sacred and profane, were composed; and we find that these perfumes were employed liberally both for religion and society; as indeed is and was the case at all times and in all countries of that part of the world we call vaguely the East. The perfumed wine of Lebanon was renowned. "And the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon," is one of the promises held out by the prophet Hosea to those who will confess that Asshur shall not save them, and who will return to the God of Israel. Myrrh, steeped in wine, used to be given to criminals at the moment of their torture, being supposed to have a stupefying property so that they should not feel their pains—Saint Mark speaks "of wine mingled with myrrh" offered to our Lord on the cross, though the other Evangelists make it vinegar mixed with water—and many of the substances used for perfumes were used also for condiments and medicines. Paint and perfume made up a large portion of the Jewish woman's adornments. The religious purification of women, which lasted for a year before they could be presented as fit offerings for his pleasure to the king, consisted of "six months (anointment?) with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours." Finally, the path of the bride was strewn with flowers, and watered with sweet waters.

The Assyrians of old and the Parsees of to-day; the Babylonians, the Medes, and the Persians; all and every people, of whom we have any record worthy of the name, are to be found making use of sweet scents, now in their religious rites, and now in their state ceremonies, as well as in their daily lives for pleasure, hospitality, and personal adornment; and many too as we have seen with the Egyptians, on that day after death when the body demands still the cares of the living to preserve it from decay, and themselves from added sorrow.

Coming into times when history is clearer and nearer, as with the Greeks and Romans, always the same thing meets us—a profusion of scents both as made perfumes by burning and distillation, and as the natural odour of flowers. Part of the magic of beauty by which Helen of Troy

inspired the love that ended in ruin, came, says one legend, from her special knowledge of perfumes. The nymph Enone, whom Paris first married and then deserted, too much in love to refuse her handsome faithless shepherd-spouse anything he desired, allowed him once to assist at the toilet of Venus. And he, when he became the lover of Helen, told her all he had seen, and how the perfumes and unguents were made which gave the goddess so much of her divine loveliness. Helen first made use of her knowledge for her own advantage, which was but natural; then gave her various recipes to her friends and companions, which was generous; and from this arose the art of perfumery in Greece. Incense burnt before the statue of the god, and scented oil, or pure water, or it might be wine, poured out at the same time, made the "complete oblation" which the gods found so well pleasing to them, as they sat on the cloudy Olympian heights, and watched the multitudes below. For it has ever been believed by those who burnt incense and made sacrifices to their gods that the sweet scents of gums and woods, passing upwards in smoke and through fire, formed part of the food whereon the divine life was nourished, and gave pleasurable sustenance to the deities who else, we may suppose, ran some risk of starvation. It is a belief cherished to this day by certain innocent if ignorant souls; and we have heard it gravely assigned as one reason why we, in cold unimaginative England, have no intercourse now with angels, spirits, or even the minor orders of elves and fairies, because we do not feed them on incense and sweet scents. Those therefore who burn pastilles or Bruges ribbon, who have a Rimmel's fountain playing on their tables, or who even thrust the shovel into the fire and pour on it a few drops of scent, are those who may hope not unreasonably for "manifestations" and "communications" out of the ordinary course of things. For round them flock the viewless creatures of the air; who carefully avoid all those parsimonious unperfumed folks who give them no such sweet food; and where the spirits are, come naturally signs of their presence.

In Macedonia perfumes were dear, dearer than in any other part of Greece.* When Alexander the Great was a child, he one day burnt an extravagant amount on an altar, and Leonidas rebuked him, telling him that before burning incense so prodigally he ought to have waited until he had conquered the country. When the

man who wept because there were no more worlds to subdue had overcome Asia, he sent his old tutor a cargo of myrrh and incense (six hundred talents' weight), telling him that now he could sacrifice to the gods without regard to economy. Perfumes entered largely into all the magical incantations and sybilline excitements of olden times; and no philtre could be composed without them. By their aid Circe kept Ulysses so long in her magic power; and Medea restored Eson to youth by boiling his old limbs in a bath of aromatic herbs. "Unhappily," says Monsieur Rimmel, from whose luxurious and sweetly scented book, *Le Livre des Parfums*, we have drawn the materials for this paper, "unhappily this recipe has not come down to us, else we might perhaps still find some Esons who would brave the caldron." But no more notable instance of the power of perfumes is to be found than in the story of Phaon. From a coarse ungainly pilot he became one of the most delicately beautiful of men; all because he anointed himself with a delightful essence which a mysterious and lovely woman gave him in an alabaster vase, as his recompense for carrying her to the isle of Cyprus. Myrto, the diligent votary of Venus, had a boil on her chin cured by a rose—one of those she had offered to her goddess; and athletes anointed their bodies with oil to render them both supple and slippery, adding perfume to the oil to make it still more wholesome. Aspasia wrote two volumes on the art of cosmetics, the formulas of which were engraven on tables of bronze and placed in the temples of Apollo and Æsculapius by the side of those of Hippocrates; and we may suppose that to her was owing much of the success that Athens then had in the composition of all kinds of perfumes—a success that gave her the full command of the whole market of the world.

The perfumer's shop was what the modern café is in southern Europe. Love, intrigue, politics, art—whatever you wanted to engage in—at the perfumer's you could find your double waiting for you; and you might exchange sentiments and ideas in an atmosphere redolent of roses and violets, of lilies and crocus-flowers, of iris and vine-leaves, apples and sweet herbs, and all the other perfumes in vogue at the time. There is nothing left us by which we could know them, for the inventors gave their own names to their several discoveries, as at the present time, and no recipes have been left by which an inquisitive posterity might make the like.

Solon and Socrates were opposed to too free a use of perfumes; but the objections raised by this last, one of the greatest men the world has ever seen though he was, and the special odour he would substitute, is paradoxical in the first place, and decidedly nasty in the second. All that the Greek dreamed of heaven was centred in the Elysian Fields, where the river of sweet scents flowed round the Golden City with its gates of cinnamon, its ramparts of shining emerald, and its streets paved with ivory. The blessed souls located there bathed and swam in the perfumed river; and for their better delectation, they had baths built of pure crystal, wherein a warm and odoriferous kind of dew, or "rose-rain," fell without ceasing. Besides these, five hundred fountains of perfume were always playing in the city, with three hundred and sixty-five of pure water and as many of honey; and the whole atmosphere was softened, sweetened, and refreshed by the dense vapour which ever rose from the river of sweet scents to fall again as a delicious odoriferous dew.

The Grecian love of perfumes, together with the national skill in concocting them, passed on to Rome; and the simple bunch of vervain or sage, which in early times used to be hung over the doorway of a house to counteract the evil eye, soon became only the rude symbol of a perfected art. The barber's trade was a flourishing one, and the art of perfumery joined hands with it; but the stern old Roman spirit was not subdued to the effeminacy of sweet scents without a struggle, and both L. Crassus and Julius Cæsar, wishing to restrain the excess to which the passion had risen in their days, promulgated an edict to forbid the sale in Rome of all foreign compositions, comprising under this head every kind of odoriferous mixture. It was of no good; for the young Romans had taken the taste and had adopted the habit of lavishly scenting themselves, and prohibitory laws simply made indulgence more costly, but not a whit more restrained. Under the emperors the taste grew so that there was no longer the semblance of restraint. Everything and every person was scented, from the palace walls to the water of the baths, from the lady to her slaves, the soldier to his flag, and down to the very dogs and horses. Of course all religious ceremonies were accompanied by burnt incense and sweet perfumes in wine and oil and precious unguents: so likewise in the funeral rites, where, first cremation and then the deposition of the loved ashes in the funeral

urn were occasions for the large use of perfumed woods, essential oils, aromatic herbs, and the like. When Poppæa died, Nero lavished on her funeral more incense than Arabia could supply in ten years. But then Nero was immoderately fond of perfumes, as he was immoderate in all else. In his golden palace he had the rarest device of ivory-leaves which shed flowers and scents over his guests; and in a fête which he gave on the shores of Baïæ, the expense for roses alone is said to have been equal to about twenty thousand pounds of our money. But indeed almost all the emperors had the same passionate delight in perfumes; though perhaps Caligula, Nero, Heliogabalus, and Otho were the most notorious, and did the wildest things in that way. The Roman perfumers became, as time went on, a large body, and a famous one. They lived in the quarter called Vicus Thurarius; and at Capua the principal street was almost entirely devoted to them. Their art entered into everything connected with the toilet; and there was no part of the body which the perfumer of his day did not undertake to render beautiful for ever by the aid of his medicaments. Pastilles for the breath, composed chiefly of myrrh and the lentiscus; ointments to keep the limbs supple and the skin smooth—simple for young girls, that is containing one perfume only, as rose, quince, bitter-almond, narcissus, crocus, but for matrons complex, containing many ingredients; dyes for the hair, now for golden tresses and now for raven; with many other things beside—all belonged to the Rimmels of their time; and never was the art of the perfumer in higher esteem or more lavishly rewarded than in the days when the Roman matron sat on the throne of feminine power, and united the grace of Greece with her own graver, sterner dignity.

The perfumery of savages will scarcely interest us. It is sufficient to know that they all do perfume themselves with substances more or less strong, if seldom sweet. Palm oil and cocoa-nut oil, butter-nut, and the like, lubricate their dusky skins and diffuse an intense odour about them; but they are a long way yet from anything like a due appreciation of the art, as we have it, and probably our sweetest scents would be to them either sickly or imperceptible.

From the Middle Ages up to the last century, musk, civet, ambergris, and lavender sum up the best known and most popular perfumes. It is only of comparatively quite late years that the art has made so much progress, and been enriched by so

many new ingredients as we find at present. Nevertheless, and in spite of all additions, the base of European flower scents is contained in six flowers only, namely, orange flowers, roses, jasmine, violets, acacia, and tuberoses. Others that have been tried are found of small use, and their special odour is best given by imitative compounds, as heliotrope is imitated by vanilla dashed with almonds, and so on. Add to these six bases geranium, lavender, rosemary, thyme, and some other aromatic herbs—the last three growing chiefly on the mountains round Grasse, Nice, and Cannes, which are the principal European centres for the manufactory of perfumes—add also the peel of bitter oranges of which the fruit goes to make curaçoa, the peel of citrons and bergamots of which the fruit goes to feed the cows of the district, and is good for the milk; add musk, sandal-wood, ambergris, and gum benjamin; of later days add the leaves of the patchouli (*pogostemon patchouli*, one of the *labiatae*) from India; winter-green (*gaultheria procumbens*) from the United States; various of the *andropogons*, which we call goat's-beard in our own wild flowers, from Ceylon; *ihlang-ihlang* (*unona odoratissima*, one of the *anonaceae*) from the Philippine Islands; *vanda* (*aërides suaveolens*, an orchid) chiefly from Java, but from other places too in the Indian Archipelago; *frangipani* (*plumeria alba*, one of the *apocynaceae*) from both the East and West Indies—and we have some of the principal sources whence our scent-bottles are filled, and our delicate soaps and pomades perfumed. But still, wheresoever the material is to be found, the French always remain the greatest producers; and, save as regards a few exceptional perfumes—as *attar-gul* for one, *eau-de-cologne* for another—are the best manufacturers of the sweet scents which pervade the world.

They do an immense trade in perfumery, and England is their best customer, as Russia is their worst. England took in 1867, when this table was drawn up, four hundred and twenty-four thousand five hundred kilogrammes of perfumery, valued at two million five hundred and forty-six thousand francs; Russia only thirteen thousand three hundred kilogrammes, at the value of seventy-nine thousand eight hundred francs. After England comes Brazil, then Belgium, and then Spanish America; but even Brazil does very little more than half the English trade, and Spanish America less than half. The United States took fifty-seven thousand four hundred kilo-

grammes, valued at three hundred and forty-four thousand four hundred francs; and Austria only fourteen thousand six hundred kilogrammes, paying for them eighty-seven thousand six hundred francs. Germany, in spite of her own especial industry at Cologne, took one hundred and seven thousand eight hundred kilogrammes, spending six hundred and forty-six thousand eight hundred francs on her purchase; but it would be interesting to know what amount of her own perfume she exports, and which of her numberless *Jean Marie Farinas* has the largest clientèle. England does a good trade in her own indigenous lavender water; but by far the greatest proportion is exported, perfumes, like prophets, not having much honour in their own country—all that is foreign being instinctively preferred to what is home-bred, and the question of comparative excellence counting for nothing in the choice.

No one has yet been able to analyse or demonstrate the essential action of perfume. Gas can be weighed, but not scents; the smallest known creatures—the very monads of life—can be caught by the microscopic lens and made to deliver up the secrets of their organisation, but what it is that emanates from the pouch of the musk-deer, that fills a whole space for years and years with its penetrating odour, an odour which an illimitable number of extraneous substances can carry on without diminishing it in size and weight—and what it is that the warm summer air brings to us from the flowers, no man yet has been able to determine. So fine, so subtle, so imponderable, it has eluded both our most delicate weights and measures, and our strongest lenses. If we could come to the essence of each odour, we should have made an enormous stride forward, both in hygiene and in chemistry; and none would profit more than the medical profession if it could be as conclusively demonstrated that such and such an odour proceeded absolutely from such and such a cause, as we already know of sulphur, sulphuretted hydrogen, ammonia, and the like. As it is, no one knows anything; and if the art of the perfumer forms one of the chief delights of our civilised senses, the cause by which he works is a mystery solved by none.

Meanwhile we may be grateful for the result, and choice in our selection. It is never good taste to over-scent oneself, but a person who uses no kind of artificial perfume at all, neither in soap nor in pomade, nor yet in the linen, is not always the

most agreeable. A slight dash of delicate scent gives a charm of its own to a pretty woman, and helps the poor attractions of a plain one. And as all perfumes can be divided into classes, of which the fresh crisp odour of thyme may stand at one end of the scale, and the heavy odour of the lily, or the penetrating power of musk, at the other, it would be almost impossible to find a person so fastidious, and whose senses were set so cross to all natural circumstances, that not one of the numerous perfumes in the scale would delight him. But in the choice of the favourite perfume, its strength and its kind, we may find the key to much that is characteristic in our friends; nature revealing itself in the habitual use of the coarse scent called *verbena* or in the dainty fragrance of the violet, in the luxurious lusciousness of the *Ess bouquet* or the spiritual cleanliness of *eau-de-cologne*, as much as in the habitual preference of beef-steaks and porter or game and wine, of trenchant green or shadowy and subtle grey, of raging scarlet or the deeper passion of violet and purple.

GRANNY.

THIS is an age of rehabilitation. It is astonishing how many memories condemned by passion and prejudice to oblivion; or suffered, by negligence or stolid ignorance, to dwell among the moles and bats; have been rescued from obscurity, and borne with acclamation into the temple of fame. Where mud has been carefully heaped over them by past generations, it has been as industriously cleared away, and the buried ones have been delivered up even brighter than before.

Who now clings to the fond belief, so earnestly inculcated in times gone by, that the Corsican gentleman who kept the world in such a pother, was compounded of ogre, fool, and coward? Who weighs Farmer George's political bigotry and obstructive predilections against his sound good sense and sterling honesty? Who persists in regarding Oliver Cromwell in the light of a canting brewer, with a monomania for regicide, and ignores the stately gifts that set a kingdom free and gave her the place of highest honour in the council of nations? Many a lesser hero has been thus disinterred and belauded. We excavate our men of name like old sculptures, and, viewing them no longer through the misty medium of error and detraction, enjoy their

fair proportions, and think them fairer for the wrong they have suffered.

The difficulty of entering upon the personal defence of an abstract being, can alone have prevented the party I am about to name from finding better champions than I can pretend to be. For a long time, and from time to time, quiet protests—characteristic of her gentle nature—have been put forward, but with little other result than a scornful smile, and it is only now, when there is a risk of her very name becoming a synonym for something jocular or absurd, that stronger measures seem expedient. They should be large and sweeping. Her emancipation should be complete. If no better knight be ready, I demand this quest. My lance is in the rest, and on the banner that proudly flouts the breeze above my head, you may read, "My Grandmother."

Surely there can be no question that this venerable member of society has not, so frequently as might be wished, occupied that position which her extended years, her varied experience, her not inconsiderable savings, richly deserve! That she may be possessed of remarkable personal, as well as mental attractions, is evidenced by the jealous care with which the legislature has guarded against a union with one's grandmother, placing her at the very head of that prohibitory catalogue which has kindled so many inclinations, theretofore dormant, in the innocent mind.

There are tales, bearing the stamp of history, which seem to teach us that man's romantic nature has not been always proof against the fascinations of his charming ancestress. I recal one notable instance, which is as good as a thousand.

A young German of noble family was accustomed to pass an occasional half-hour in intellectual converse with an extremely prepossessing person, who was constantly tripping into his room, and, on one pretext or other, arousing the moody student from the philosophical meditations that were beginning to affect his health.

Little by little, these interviews became so agreeable as to awaken in the young gentleman a certain curiosity as to what his feelings actually were. On a careful analysis, made in the true German fashion, it turned out that he was in love.

Now, for the first time, it occurred to him, that he had never cared to inquire what member of his mother's household it was who had so pleasantly invaded his study.

His mother denied all knowledge of the

intruder, and treated the whole matter as a dream.

"Mother," said Fritz, firmly but respectfully, "to-morrow, I present that dream to you, and seek your blessing."

On the stranger's next visit, Fritz flung away his pipe, sank at her feet, and proposed. The charming creature passed her hand gently over Fritz's long hair—he wore it very long—and with a mournful smile replied:

"There are but two difficulties, mein lieber Fritz; but these are grave. I died ninety-five years ago, and was your maternal great-grandmother."

With that she vanished, and Fritz, refilling his pipe, did not invoke the maternal blessing that day.

This very singular incident supplies the subject of a noble German play, and, at a time when spiritual visitations are the theme of daily discussion, its importance will be readily understood.

Bereft of my grandmother at the early age of five, I was not exposed to the dangers encountered by the susceptible Fritz; the impression she left upon my mind being a compound of reverence and personal security, the former excited by her incredible age, and exhaustless stores of knowledge both in fact and fiction, the latter by a conviction that nothing harmful, be it ghost, imp, giant, or fairy, would be able to sustain for one moment a hand-to-hand contest with my granny.

By the way, let me mention another peculiarity, I had almost said privilege, enjoyed by the grandmother, namely, that her title admits of a charming abbreviation without parallel in other relationships. There is something in "granny" at once tender and imposing, and, as I felt at the time, entirely in harmony both with her personal prowess, and caressing ways.

My most shapen idea of "granny" was that she was a being about twenty feet high, composed of a series of soft grey billows, which, growing smaller as one floundered upward, were crowned with a large laughing face, having three chins, and, when reached, very warm and comforting to the touch. Lightish-brown curls depended from granny's brow, and to these, in the conviction that they were placed there to be pulled, and occasionally sucked, I paid great attention, especially after discovering that with a good resolute tug at one of these little brown bells, I could set the whole chime in sympathetic motion.

But the keenest enjoyment was when

paying a morning visit, en robe de chambre, to granny, before she rose. Nestling beside her warm shoulder in the mighty bed, I listened, in a tremor of delight, to her narration of the extraordinary events which had occurred, nay, were still occurring, immediately about us, yet of which I had not been in the slightest degree aware.

There I learned how the old lady, who resided in the left-hand corner of the top of the bed, was in the habit of visiting another old lady, who occupied a commodious—not to say, palatial—dwelling in the canopy, with the view of consulting her as to what should be done to little boys who, when offered nice black syrup, made faces, and pushed it away;—what adventures befel her on the road, and how this friendship came to a sudden and melancholy end, by the reduction to cinders of the canopy old lady—a fate which invariably follows those who play with fire! Seen through the medium of childhood's ready faith, all this appeared to me perfectly feasible, and even the fact of two old ladies fixing their abode among so many perils and inconveniences, seemed justified by their propinquity to that haven of all safety—granny.

A time arrived when, being unwell, I was kept much in the nursery. Here everybody came to see me, except my granny. It seemed to be of no use sending her pressing invitations, even though I promised her tea out of my own wooden tea-cups. She never came. At last, one night, I saw, or dreamed I saw her, standing beside my cot, smiling very sweetly, and raising her hands above me, as in prayer. When I told my mother next day, she burst out crying, and turned away.

The first time I went down-stairs (I had a new black frock on, and wanted granny to see it), I ran straight to her room, but she wasn't there, and even her bed had gone. I asked what had become of her? had she left the family? On the contrary (I was told), granny had gone to the great gathering of the whole family of love, whither we must all strive to follow.

Granniless myself, I found a kind of solace in alien grandmothers belonging to my playmates and schoolfellows. They were not so good as mine, and nothing like so tall. Still, there were points of resemblance. They were mostly clad in grey, and had light-brown curls. Some took snuff (mine didn't), and nearly all seemed conscious of the value to the youthful mind of fairy literature, and to the youthful palate of liquorice and barley-sugar.

Liberal and enlightened in their views, anything approaching to severe study appeared to be repugnant to the granny mind. Holiday and indulgence were written in every line of the soft brows of these early grannies. Their decrees seemed to be irresistible, and not the less so for being promulgated with a degree of gentleness not characteristic of such domestic tyrants as I have since known.

As years crept on, the grandame influence became less marked, less openly exerted, but no less benign. She was like the beneficent planet that steals into a frowning horoscope, and at once disarms the malignant influences assembling there. Peace was her acknowledged element. At the sound of her soft though laboured step, dissensions died away, and a proposed appeal to granny has stifled many a nascent storm. "Hush!—Granny!" and all again was sunshine.

Who was it that, when Dicky Bolter vanished from school and joined a travelling circus, tracked him under all disguises of name and person, reconciled him both to the home authorities and to the still more aggrieved and scandalised Doctor Quicquid, and lived to see him the delight of his home, and the ornament of a high profession? His grandmother.

When my friend, Charley Stampshy, fell into the hands of Mr. Wrewin—the advertising philanthropist, who lends sums varying from ten to twenty thousand pounds on mere personal security, and then forgets the whole transaction until forcibly repaid—when, I say, Mr. Stampshy was at the very height of his friendship with that fine fellow, who was it that suddenly stepped in and broke the bond, at a cost to herself of more than a thousand pounds? His granny.

Have not Harry Wildote and Jack Mullooney shown me cheque after cheque, in a shaky but delicious hand, drawn upon the Bank of England itself (nothing less for prudent granny), the consideration for which seemed to have been little more than a partaking of tea and muffins at half-past six?

Who, at her golden nuptials, opened the ball with a grace and agility that put to shame the languid movements of the age, supped at three, and was up to breakfast next day as if nothing had occurred? Why, George Pounder's granny, cheerful Mrs. Purr Enniel.

Do not police annals record an attempted burglary in Cavendish-square, the discom-

fiture of which was chiefly due to an intrepid Individual, whose quick ears were the first to take alarm, and who, hastily arming with the poker and tongs, rushed out upon the staircase, and defied the intruders to persevere? Who was this? The granny of the house, aged eighty-seven!* We knew her, and so tickled was my father, an old soldier, with this act of prowess, that he sent her his sword, with an assurance that, at need, she might rely upon its temper, since, like Othello's, a better never did itself sustain upon a soldier's thigh. I have her note of thanks still.

The statistics of British grandmothers have not been kept with sufficient accuracy to enable me to ascertain their average number, or duration of life. That they are endowed with extraordinary vital energies, is happily certain. We have heard it roundly, but surely incautiously, averred that some few, especially when richly dowered, or in the enjoyment of liberal annuities, never die at all, but content themselves, and fate, with taking to a wheeled chair.

Whether the climate of Italy is peculiarly adapted to granny-life I cannot say. But I know that, in that sunny land, the grandmother is an institution without which no household would seem complete.

Travelling at a disturbed period, I had the opportunity of seeing the interior of many a household that would not, under ordinary circumstances, have been open to the stranger guest. In every one of these, granny was a conspicuous figure. Seated a little apart, but by no means neglected, knitting, or winding silk from the cocoon, granny's presence and influence were quietly but sensibly felt, and the brown and wrinkled face, like a ripe old pear, seemed always ready to respond to those who sought it, with sweetness and benevolence.

After the remarks and examples heretofore adduced, it is indeed a painful duty to repeat that the grandmother stands in need of redress. Is that questioned? Then let me be permitted a little illustration.

While sharing a friend's sleeping apartment, I was aroused one night by the movements of my companion. I saw him rise, take up his watch, intently study, and finally relinquish it, with an indignant:

* Fact. It may be added that the alert and courageous old lady, Mrs. Susanna Long, aunt of the late and only Lord Farnborough, survived to see her hundred and third birthday.

"Psha! Your grandmother! Don't tell me it's only half-past two!"

"Your grandmother!" By what laws descent in watches may be regulated, I cannot pretend to guess. But, granting that my friend's watch had a grandmother, mark the injustice. Is it not perfectly possible that she is still in existence, a time-piece of unwearied industry and stainless truth? At this very moment the hardy old thing may be ticking away in some Swiss chalet, governing the movements of the entire household, and happily unconscious of the shaft thus wantonly aimed at her reputation.

If my friend intended no such direct allusion, then are we forced upon the painful alternative that his interjection, "Psha! Your grandmother!" must be taken in the offensive sense in which rude schoolboys, nay, even students of a riper age, are accustomed to express disdain and incredulity. "Nonsense! Your grandmother!" "Shut up! Your grandmother!" "Go home to," "teach," or otherwise associate yourself with your grandmother—all these suggestions tending to the same object, that of bringing contempt upon that most respected name, as synonymous with falsehood, deceit, and imbecility!

At once, and frankly, let there be an end of this; and when next the question may be proposed to us, which member of our domestic circle, parents excepted, has the strongest claims to our tender respect and reverential care, let us all, with one exulting shout, reply: "Granny!"

A BUCCANEER BALLAD.

It was only a merry corvette that rode the South Pacific Sea,
But the man who held that craft in hand was brave Lieutenant Lee;
And when he was told of slaves and gold in Arequipa Bay,
And when there came a spy of fame to show him the difficult way,
"I'll have those rascally buccaneers by their ugly necks," said he.

Oh, how soft was the summer air when the little Firefly crept
Under the low green woodland shores where the villanous pirates slept;
Under the heavy fringes of foliage, fruit, and flower,
Where safe, as they deemed, the scoundrels enjoyed their holiday hour,
And they drank good wine from stolen cups, and their luckless captives wept.

In she paddled, the Firefly—the channel was hard to find,
As if to the heart of a forest it seemed to wind and wind;
But right was the guide, he knew the tide, he had been there a slave,
He longed to see the pirates in conquered agony rave.
Came the delight that very night for which he had prayed and pined.

Quietly lay the Firefly under the great trees where
Never the water rippled nor soft wind stirred the air;
Never a whisper we uttered, but watched them, lazy as swine,

Swinging in easy hammocks, while white girls served them wine.

"'Tis your very last day," said Lee to himself. "Drink on and never spare."

Ay, we could hear their ribald songs as the sudden evening fell,

And their bestial jests that well might shame the very fiends of hell,

And sobs we heard, and screams and shouts, and a roar of impious song,

And we longed with cutlass to strike down the cowardly scoundrel throng;

But Lee lay close, for he knew his game, and meant to play it well.

Yes, well it was played. We made our raid when the fools with wine were gay,

They were five to one, but the thing was done in a swift and sudden way.

The cutlass bright did work that night, and a horde of rascals killed,

But we managed to save the chief, a knave of most gigantic build;

He was hung in his gorgeous gems and gold at the yard-arm next day.

Plenty of plunder was there in that base pirate hold;
They had ransacked churches and houses, and taken

jewels and gold,
They had taken beautiful girls, too: we could but bring them back,

To the homes whence they were stolen in midnight wild and black;

But ah, they might never know again the happy days of old!

This mighty cup was part of my share. When, from its golden brim,

The rich wine flows, my eyesight grows with tears of memory dim,

For I know with pain that never again I shall sail the southern seas;

Never again shall scour the main for scoundrels such as these;

Never again my steel shall cleave a pirate limb from limb.

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

THE LIFE GUARDS.

THE first body of men enrolled to specially guard the person of the sovereign seems to have been a corps of twenty-four archers, chosen by Richard Cœur de Lion in Palestine, and called by him Sergeants-at-Arms, who kept watch in complete armour round the royal tent, to guard him from the Moslem sabres. Henry the Seventh established a band of fifty archers for the same purpose, and denominated them Yeomen of the Guard. Henry the Eighth, always fond of splendour, had also fifty "spears" to attend him, each spear attended by an archer and two men-at-arms. This corps was disbanded, but revived by Henry the Eighth again in 1559, under the title of Gentlemen - Pensioners. In Elizabeth's time, Raleigh was captain, and the queen was proud of her handsome attendants.

During the Civil War, some noblemen

and gentlemen of quality formed themselves into a troop of guards to protect King Charles's person, and their servants constituted an auxiliary troop. A third troop was also formed for the queen, and styled "Her Majesty's Own Troop." These gallant gentlemen signalled themselves in many fights with the Ironsides, till at last they were nearly all shot and sabred under the walls of Chester. When the Restoration was in progress, Charles the Second, having upwards of three thousand Cavaliers who had rallied round him at Breda, determined to form a body-guard. He therefore selected eighty gentlemen, formed them into a corps of Life Guards, and appointed Lord Gerard (afterwards Earl of Macclesfield), their captain and commander. These Guards, while the merry king was in Holland, mounted guard twenty at a time, and twenty (ten on each side) accompanied his ponderous coach. Within the month the Life Guards were increased to about six hundred. At the tumultuous entry into rejoicing London, the king's twelve ministers rode at the head of three squadrons of the Life Guards, the cavalcade being led by troops of gentlemen in cloth of silver, blue, grey, and black, while six hundred mounted liverymen followed in black velvet coats and gold chains. On the following day, the Life Guards, six hundred strong, were paraded in Hyde Park before the Duke of Gloucester, the king's brother. The Life Guards then wore broad-brimmed Cavalier hats, with white feathers drooping to the back. Their scarlet coats were ornamented with gold lace, their broad white collars spread over their laced shoulders, their waists were girt with scarlet sashes tied behind. The men wore ruffles at the wrist, and their long hair fell in masses on their shoulders. They wore high jack-boots, cuirasses, and helmets, their weapons were carbines, pistols, and swords. The long tails of their horses on state occasions were usually tied up and decorated with ribands. The regiment gradually drooped, after the first fever of royalty wore out, and as the king's evil qualities developed, to four hundred men.

The year after the Restoration, the new regiment first fleshed its maiden swords. On January the 6th, 1661, a band of about sixty mad Anabaptists, led by Venner, their preacher, proclaimed "King Jesus," and sallied out of their meeting-house, in Swan-alley, Coleman-street, to set up the Kingdom of Christ with the sword. They

repulsed the City train-bands, but hearing the Life Guards were coming, retreated to Caen Wood. A detachment of Life Guards, and two hundred foot, beat them up about midnight, and, after a short skirmish, the Anabaptists fled. Early on the 8th, twenty of the Life Guards, under Colonel Corbet, met them again in Wood-street, Cheapside. A sharp fight took place, and some twenty of the rebels, and Venner himself, were killed or ridden down. The rest fled, and took refuge in a house, which they defended desperately. At last, surrounded and hemmed in, the remnant was taken. They lost about twenty men in the skirmish (killing as many of the Guards) and a preacher, and twenty more were hung, drawn, and quartered.

Soon after this tussle, the king augmented the corps of Life Guards to five hundred men, and divided them into three troops—"His Majesty's Own," "the Duke of York's," and "the Duke of Albemarle's." The captain of the king's troop received one pound ten shillings a day, the lieutenants fifteen shillings, and the men four shillings. The corporals of the Life Guards were at this time commissioned officers, ranking (in 1679) as eldest lieutenants of horse, and were generally called, by courtesy, brigadiers. In 1661, when the servants of the French and Spanish ambassadors came to blows on the landing of the Swedish ambassador at the Tower, and several persons were killed, the Life Guards had to interfere. In 1664, King Charles introduced the practice of having a party of Life Guards stationed inside the palace on gala and festive days. During the time of the Plague, the Life Guards attended the king in his progresses, and during that almost equally terrible calamity, the Great Fire, they were under arms the whole time, escorting the king and duke, or helping the distressed and scared people. At this period no recruit was admitted to the Life Guards till he had taken the oath of allegiance and supremacy. This was a means of excluding all Puritans and Roman Catholics. In 1666, the king granted the Guards precedence of all other cavalry, and gave the captains the rank of eldest colonel of horse, the lieutenants the rank of eldest majors, the cornets that of eldest captains. The year after, the strength of the three troops amounted to thirty-five officers, twelve trumpeters, three kettle-drummers, and six hundred private gentlemen. In 1668, the king appointed his favourite son, the Duke of Monmouth, captain and colonel

of the king's own troop. This appointment was made publicly at a review in Hyde Park, the trumpets sounding, and drums beating, as the duke rode to his troop. In 1670, the king went for the first time to Parliament by land, escorted by the Life Guards, a practice which became general after the destruction of Whitehall by fire, in 1699. At the state funeral of the Duke of Albemarle (Monk), the procession was closed by the Guards, who followed the effigy of the duke, which was clad in blue armour, and borne in a chariot covered with black velvet. The Guards at this time were quartered in Drury-lane, Westminster, and Charing Cross. From 1671 to 1810, the Guards were always employed to guard treasure sent from London to Portsmouth, and were also engaged in aiding the excise officers to collect the revenues, and guarding the treasure on its way to London.

The Guards' real fighting began in 1672. When England and France made war on the Dutch, one hundred and fifty of the Life Guards were sent to Flanders under the command of the Duke of Monmouth and the Earl of Feversham. At the siege of Maestrich the English troops greatly distinguished themselves. The duke at a dash carried the counterscarp and the outward half-moon before the Brussels gate in spite of the springing of several mines, which blew sixty of the assailants into the air. The enemy recovering the works by a furious sally, Monmouth and Churchill (better known as the great Marlborough) flung away their carbines and their swords, leaped, with twelve gentlemen of the Life Guards who volunteered, over the trenches, rushed through a sally-port, and rallied our retreating infantry. They soon drove back the Dutch, and regained the outer half-moon. A few days after, the besieged beat a parley, and surrendered the town. In the two campaigns the Life Guards lost fifty men.

In 1678, when war was declared with France, a division of horse grenadiers was added to each of the three troops of Life Guards. The former carried fusils, with bayonets, hatchets, and a grenade pouch full of hand-grenades. At the same time the kettle-drummers and trumpeters were ordered to wear velvet coats, trimmed with silver lace, and blazoned back and breast with crown and cypher, the trumpet banners being trimmed with gold and silver fringe. At the same period the king's troop was distinguished by blue rib-

bons and blue carbine belts, the queen's by green ribbons and green velvet carbine belts, the duke's troop by yellow ribbons and carbine belts. The two captains specially waiting on the king carried ebony staffs with gold and silver heads—being, in fact, the precursors of the modern gold and silver sticks in waiting. In 1674-8, rifled carbines were issued to each troop of Life Guards—the first introduction of rifled weapons, says the chronicler of the regiment, into the British service. In 1684, the Life Guards are described as wearing scarlet coats and red cloaks lined with blue. The standard was crimson, with the royal cypher and crown, the guidon being rounded and slit at the end. The grenadiers of the three troops wore blue, green, and yellow loops to their coats.

In the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion, the Life Guards did good service, and at Sedgemoor, after three hours' fighting, scattered the right flank of the rebels. They were also at the passage of the Boyne with King William, where their loss was heavy. In the war in Flanders three troops of the Life Guards fought for the king, and at Steenkirke did their best to turn the day. At Neerwinden, in 1693, King William headed the Life Guards in person to relieve some broken Hanoverian and Dutch horse. The Duke of Ormond, colonel of the second troop, had his horse shot under him, was severely wounded, and taken prisoner. Driven back at last by a deluge of twenty-two fresh squadrons, the king lingered so long that he was all but surrounded, and was only rescued by a dash of the third troop of Life Guards, led by the Honourable Hatton Compton, who held the enemy in check for a time. Compton was promoted at once to the rank of colonel. The Life Guards were also at the surrender of Namur, where their brigadier-general arrested Marshal Bouffler, one of the prisoners, for the non-fulfilment of terms. King William made many alterations in the Guards' uniform. Gold lace was substituted for silver on their coats, and feathers, which they had discontinued, were resumed—scarlet, white, and green for the three different troops.

The Life Guards were not employed in Queen Anne's wars, the queen being afraid of Jacobite plots. In 1742, the king, taking up the cause of the Queen of Hungary, sent over sixteen thousand men to Flanders under the Earl of Stair, and among these were two troops of Life Guards.

At Dettingen (1743), under the king's

own eye, the Life Guards behaved like true Englishmen, and at Fontenoy the Life Guards were also present, and gallantly protected the retreat.

"Gentlemen," the Earl of Crawford cried to them, as they turned to face the enemy, "mind the word of command, and you shall gain immortal honour." The Life Guards had seven officers wounded in this battle.

The Life Guards, who, as home troops, had had the painful duty of quelling the weavers' riots in 1719, were also active against the Gordon rioters in 1780, and the Burdett rioters of 1810. In 1812, the regimental uniform was changed; cocked hats and feathers were discontinued, and brass helmets, with black horse-crests, à la Grecque, substituted; the long, old-fashioned coats, with gold lace on the front, skirts, and cuffs, were replaced by short coatees, with gold lace on the collars, cuffs, and ends of the skirts only; a scarlet and gold-lace sash was adopted for the officers, and a blue and yellow sash for the men. Jack-boots and leather breeches were used on state occasions; for ordinary duty blue-grey pantaloons, with scarlet seams, and short boots. The old muskets and horse-pistols were sent to the Tower, and short carbines and small pistols issued in their place.

After more than sixty years of home service of luxury and pageantry, four squadrons of the Life Guards, in 1812, were sent to Portugal to help chase the French out of Spain. But the mountain country gave the big men on the big horses few opportunities for fighting. At the great rout of Vittoria, however, they came into action in the pursuit along the Pampeluna road, and helped in the tremendous overthrow of poor King Joseph. In April, 1814, the Life Guards escorted Louis the Eighteenth into London; and when the Prince Regent and the allied sovereigns reviewed them, June the 20th, in Hyde Park, a subdivision of the Second Life Guards appeared in cuirasses, which had been laid aside for upwards of a century. The black horsehair crests to the helmet were now discontinued, and blue and red woollen crests adopted, with a stiff scarlet and white plume on the left side of the helmet; sabretaches were added to the sword-belts, the scarlet horse furniture was replaced by sheepskin shabraques — black for the officers, and white for the men; the horse-rug was blue trimmed with gold lace, and the men's sashes were scarlet and yellow, instead of yellow and blue.

But the Waterloo campaign gave the Life Guards an opportunity of gathering up their arrears of glory. At the first alarm at the outbreak of the unchained lion of Elba, both regiments of Life Guards were sent to Ostend. The First was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Ferriar, the Second by Lieutenant-Colonel the Honourable E. P. Lygon, the first cavalry brigade being commanded by Major-General Lord Edward Somerset and Lieutenant-General the Earl of Uxbridge. On the 17th of June, 1815, Wellington, falling back to keep up his communication with Blücher, was pressed by the French cavalry in Genappe. The Seventh Hussars failing to break the French lancers, the Earl of Uxbridge ordered the First Life Guards to charge, and the lancers were instantly scattered to the winds.

At Waterloo the Life Guards fought like knights of romance. When the French made their desperate attacks, column after column, with vast masses of artillery, on our centre, and somewhat shook it, a body of cuirassiers were seen ascending the crest of our position. The first cavalry brigade then deployed, advanced, and halted a few minutes between our first and second lines, not one hundred yards from the enemy's ranks. The slips were pulled, and in a moment they charged in line with tremendous effect. The first cuirassiers the Second Life Guards encountered were the Carabiniers à Cheval, the very cream of Napoleon's cavalry.

"The cuirassiers of the French Imperial Guard," says a military writer of 1815, "were all arrayed in armour, the front cuirass in the form of a pigeon's breast, made effectually to turn off a musket-shot, unless fired very near, owing to its brightness. The back cuirass is made to fit the back. The cuirasses weigh from nine to eleven pounds each, according to the size of the man, and are stuffed inside with a pad; they fit on by a kind of fish-scaled clasp, and are put off and on in an instant. The men have helmets the same as our Horse Guards, and straight long swords and pistols, but no carbines. All the accounts agree in the great advantage that the French cuirassiers derived from their armour. Their swords were three inches longer than any used by the allies, and in close action the cuts of our sabres did no execution unless they fortunately came across the neck of the enemy. The French, feeling themselves secure in their armour, advanced deliberately and steadily,

until they came within about twenty yards of our ranks, as a musket-ball could not penetrate the cuirasses at a greater distance. The cuirass, however, was attended with one disadvantage; the wearer, in close action, cannot use his arm with perfect facility in all directions; he chiefly thrusts, but cannot cut with ease. The cuirassiers are all chosen men, are required to be above six feet high, must have served in three campaigns, and have been twelve years in the service, and of a good character; and if there is a good horse to be found, they have it. It is to be observed that a wound through a cuirass mostly proves fatal."

The Marquis of Anglesea was in the rear of our last troop of cavalry, when, looking behind him, he observed a French regiment formed across the road to charge. He instantly turned round, and alone galloped back towards the enemy, waving his hat to his soldiers, who had advanced some way on their retreat, and were at a considerable distance from their general. Major Kelly, of the Life Guards, was the first person to join his lordship at full gallop, and these two heroes remained for a minute or two close in front of the French, who did not stir, amazed, as it would seem, by the gallantry which they witnessed. The regiment soon came up, and dashed pell-mell amongst the enemy, who were entirely overthrown.

The Life Guards, although at first somewhat daunted at the idea of meeting men in armour, by their physical strength appalled the veteran enemy. Often, in the conflict of La Belle Alliance, did the Earl of Uxbridge turn his eye towards them, exclaiming, "Now for the honour of the Household Brigade." Major Kelly, of the Life Guards, encountered and killed the colonel of the First Regiment of French Cuirassiers, after which he stripped the vanquished of his epaulets, and carried them as a trophy. One man is known to have had three horses shot, and was taken prisoner; but being rescued by light dragoons, he returned and remounted to the charge.

"The First Life Guards," says an officer of the Second, who was present, "have lost Colonel Ferriar and Captain Lind, and several of the officers have been wounded. Lieutenant-Colonel Fitzgerald was killed by a cannon-shot soon after the first charge. Captain Irby was taken prisoner, his horse having fallen with him in returning from the charge. He has since

made his escape and joined us; but they have stripped him of his clothes and money, and threatened to take his life. Lieutenant Waymouth is missing, but supposed to be taken prisoner. Colonel Lygon and most of the officers had their horses wounded during the action. About ten P.M., the army bivouacked for the night; there was then only one subaltern, with two corporals and six privates of the Second Life Guards remaining, and about double the number of the First Life Guards, but no officers, all or most of them having been dismounted. The command of the remains of the two regiments for the night was given by Lord Edward Somerset to the remaining officer of the Second Regiment.

"Several of our men, who had their horses shot during the battle, joined us, mounted upon horses which had lost their riders, some belonging to our regiment, others belonging to the First Life Guards, &c., and many French. The stragglers of the other regiments are similarly mounted. We have, at present, about forty men with us; we know of about forty-nine wounded, and the names of about sixteen killed; but our loss has been much greater, as I imagine most of those returned missing are killed, as the French did not take many of our men prisoners.

"Lord Wellington was near our brigade several times in the course of the day. He appeared much pleased with the conduct of the troops, and is said to have observed to the general officer near him that it was the hardest battle he ever fought, and that he had seen many charges of cavalry, but never any to equal those made by the heavy brigades, particularly the Household. We made, in all, four charges, namely, two against the cuirassiers, and two against infantry."

The Second Life Guards, on the morning of the 18th, were not much above one hundred and eighty strong, part of the regiment having been detached. But of this number it has been since ascertained that the loss on that day was one hundred and fifty-three horses and eighty-six men, which includes those who were killed and those who died of their wounds. The First lost four officers and seventeen rank and file, forty-one wounded; sixty-four horses were killed.

A letter from a Life Guardsman, speaking of the havoc made among the cuirassiers of the Imperial Guard at the battle of Waterloo, contains the following homely, but emphatic description: "Until we came

up with our heavy horses, and our superior weight of metal, nothing was done with the cuirassiers. Unless one got now and then a cut at their faces, not one of them gave way; we therefore galloped at them, and fairly rode them down. When they were unhorsed we cracked them like lobsters in their shells, and by the coming up of the cannon afterwards, thousands of them were squeezed as flat as pancakes."

Gooley, a Life Guardsman, who, from being bald, was known among his comrades by the appellation of the Marquis of Granby, had his horse shot under him; in the charge his helmet fell off, but on foot he attacked a cuirassier, whom he killed, and mounted his horse, his comrades in the meanwhile cheering him with "Well done, Marquis of Granby!"

Hodgson (one of the favourite models of Haydon the painter, a perfect Achilles, standing six feet four inches) charged up to the French baggage, and saw artillery driver-boys of sixteen crying on their horses. In coming back a whole French regiment opened and let him pass at full gallop, then closed and gave him a volley, but never hit him or horse. The first man who stopped him was an Irishman in the French service. He dashed at him, and said, "D——n you, I'll stop your crowing." Hodgson said he was frightened, as he had never fought anybody before with swords. Watching the cuirassier, however, he found he could not move his horse so quickly as he could, so, letting go the reins, and guiding his horse with his knees, as the cuirassier gave point at his throat, Hodgson cut his sword hand off, and dashed his sabre through his throat, turning it round and round. The first cut he gave him was on his cuirass, which he thought was silver lace. The shock nearly broke his own arm. As Hodgson rode back, after being fired at, an officer encountered him. Hodgson cut his horse at the nape, and as it dropped dead the officer's helmet dropped off, and Hodgson saw a bald head and white hairs. The officer begged for mercy, but at that instant a troop of lancers was approaching at the gallop, so Hodgson cleaved his head in two at a blow, and escaped. The recollection of the white hairs, he told people, pained him often. Before he got back to the British lines a lancer officer charged him, and missing his thrust, came right on Hodgson and his horse. Hodgson got clear, and cut his opponent's head off at the neck at one blow.

But of all the heroes of Waterloo, Shaw

the pugilist Life Guardsman towers above them all. "The line of cavalry," says John Scott, "at the commencement of the engagement, was drawn up a little in the rear of the eminence on which our infantry was arrayed; they could not in this situation see much of the battle, but the shot and shells flew thickly among them, which they were compelled to sustain without moving. Nothing tries a gallant spirit more than this. Shaw was hit and wounded in the breast; his officer desired him to fall out. "Please God," said this brave fellow, "I shan't leave my colours yet." Shortly after orders came down that the cavalry should advance; the whole line moved forward to the top of the hill. Here they saw our artillerymen running from their guns, attacked by heavy masses of French dragoons. "It was agreed amongst ourselves," said a private to Scott, "that when we began to gallop, we should give three cheers, but ours was not very regular cheering, though we made noise enough." Shaw was fighting seven or eight hours, dealing destruction to all around him; at one time he was attacked by six of the French Imperial Guard, four of whom he killed, but at last fell by the remaining two. A comrade, who was by his side a great part of the day, noticed one particular cut, which is worth recording. As he was getting down the rising ground into the hollow road, a cuirassier waited and gave point at him. Shaw parried the thrust, and before the Frenchman recovered, cut him right through his brass helmet to the chin, and "his face fell off him like a bit of apple."

A Life Guardsman, whose desperate wounds went quite through his body, told John Scott that he was left upon the ground within the French lines, wounded in a charge; he threw his helmet from him, for his enemies were chiefly exasperated against our heavy dragoons, by whom they had suffered so much. After some time he raised his head, two French lancers saw the movement, and, galloping up to him, dropped both their weapons into his side; they left him for dead, but he still retained life, and shortly afterwards a plundering party came down from the enemy's position. They stripped the poor fellow, and several of them, who had been in England as prisoners of war, took this favourable opportunity of reading him a lecture on several political facts and principles, such as the right of the French nation to choose its own sovereign, and the perfidy and rapacity of England, whose inexhaustible gold was

ever at work producing wars, and the various miseries of dissension.

After the poor Life Guardsman was stripped, they sent him to the rear, but being too weak to walk, he was dragged with his feet trailing along the ground for fourteen miles, being occasionally struck by those about him, to force him to move his legs. He saw several of his fellow-prisoners murdered; but the French being in full retreat as the night came on, and closely pursued by the Prussians, they at last permitted the miserable man to sink down on the dunghill of an inn in one of the small towns through which they were at the time passing. Here he lay with blood running about him; he was awakened from a kind of dose, by some one creeping down by his side. He turned his head, and saw his comrade, the famous Shaw, who could scarcely crawl to the heap, being almost cut to pieces. "Ah, my dear fellow, I'm done for!" faintly whispered the latter; but few words passed between them, and they soon dropped asleep. In the morning poor Shaw was lying dead, with his face leaning on his hand. Shaw, says Scott, carried death to every one against whom he rode; he is said to have killed a number of the cuirassiers sufficient to make a show against the list of slain furnished for any of Homer's heroes. His death was occasioned rather by the loss of blood from many cuts than the magnitude of any one; he had been riding about, fighting the whole of the day with his body streaming; and at night he died, as we have seen.

In the pursuit of the French three cuirassiers turned into a cul-de-sac lane, and were there taken prisoners by Private John Johnson, of the Second Life Guards.

During the battle Wellington came to the head of the First Life Guards and thanked them for their distinguished bravery. On their return to England the duke came to the barracks of the Second in King-street, Portman-square, and observed to their colonel, Earl Cathcart, that the regiment's conduct had raised in his heart the liveliest feelings of satisfaction.

The earl replied: "I have known the regiment, your grace, more than twenty years, and have always had reason to feel proud of its conduct."

In July, 1815, the Prince Regent declared himself colonel-in-chief of both regiments of Life Guards, as a mark of his high appreciation of their distinguished bravery and good conduct.

In 1817, the men's double-breasted coatees were replaced by single-breasted coats with brass scale epaulets; their brass helmets changed to steel helmets and bear-skin crests; their trousers to claret colour, with broad red stripe.

That excellent prince, the Regent, was, like other royal theorists in war, remarkably fond of army tailoring. In July, 1821, steel cuirasses were again issued to the Life Guards, and the men appeared at the August coronation in bear-skin grenadier caps, having white plumes passing circularly over the crowns of their caps. In 1831, William the Fourth presented the two regiments of Life Guards with two silver kettle-drums, embossed with devices in frosted metal. In 1837, the king introduced a new cap and plume, and changed the trousers from claret mixture to dark blue and scarlet stripe. Since that time, as our readers know, the uniform of the Life Guards has undergone more than one modification.

No regiment has had fewer opportunities of winning glory than the Life Guards; yet few, it must be confessed, have made more glorious use of those opportunities when they have come.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XLII. THE DOCTOR DISMISSED.

QUITE a change had come over Mr. Doughty. Ill as he was, he had, besides, grown eager, excitable, and highly irritable—a state of mind that did not at all forward his recovery. He was eager "to do something," to be gone, to rush out on the world, and, above all, leave Brickford, with all its miserable and torturing associations, behind him. He was heard pacing his room all day, and for a great part of the night, tramping to and fro, talking loudly, and chafing under his miseries. Those who entered found him busy in the midst of a perfect wreck of papers, which he had unpacked from the boxes that had come down, and by arranging which he was trying to distract his thoughts. Then he would start up and recommence his pacing. He longed to be well, to be free, and, at last, to be alone.

On the day when he had heard of Corinna's abrupt departure, something in the pertinacity of his friends and relations in forcing their way in had, for the first time,

struck him as singular. A sort of nervous apprehension of what was, indeed, the truth came upon him, and made him still more eager to be gone. His first thought was that he should be left alone, and entirely free from the presence of people whom he had begun to detest.

He did not lose a moment, but sent for Doctor Spooner, and, after thanking him for all the trouble he had taken, told him that he now felt strong enough to dispense with the presence of a medical gentleman in his house, after that day. He would show by a substantial reward his sense of the services paid to him.

The doctor was not a little confounded at this news, and shook his head.

"Another delusion, Mr. Doughty," he said; "you are anything but well. At this moment you should be in your bed. See, you can hardly stand."

"No matter," said the patient; "I can still have your assistance. You can come and see me. And your sister's services, too—I cannot trespass on her kindness longer."

"Oh, there is no trespassing. But you must allow us to stay some time longer. It is no object to me or to her. We look only to your interest. You must consider, my dear sir, that I have a certain responsibility in this matter, and can judge better than you can. You are not in a fit state to be left alone. It would be most improper in me to sanction such a step."

"I quite appreciate your motives," said the other, wearily; "but on this point I have made up my mind. I feel better each day, and shall be better, I know, to-morrow than I am to-day. All thanks to you. In a few days I shall be strong enough to quit this place. This occupation," he said, pointing to the papers about him, "distracts me. I have them nearly all arranged. That does not look like a sick man. I worked till one o'clock last night. It keeps away wretched thoughts. In the very act of tearing up papers, do you know, I find a curious distraction."

Doctor Spooner glanced at the door, which was slightly ajar, and whence was heard during this conversation a slight rustle.

"Quite natural," he said, "you feel a relief in the action. It gives a vent for your over-excited nerves."

"I believe," said Mr. Doughty, smiling, "I must have torn up whole reams. It seems like tearing hopes, joys, sorrows—the whole past and all the future."

Again the doctor looked towards the

door with a curious expression. The other glancing at him quickly, saw it.

"At all events," he said, "my mind is made up. I must be alone in my own house. So I will ask you and Miss Spooner to leave me by this evening. You understand."

"Not this evening. Say to-morrow morning, or a day or two hence."

The other looked at him angrily.

"I have told you my wishes, and I require them to be carried out. Please to leave me at once."

The other bowed, and was retiring, when Mr. Doughty called him back.

"Forgive me," he said, putting out his hand, "for speaking so bluntly. But I do not want to see people, or have them about me, for a time at least. The human face divine, as they call it, has nothing divine for me. It sometimes goads me to madness. You must have indulgence. I have suffered a great deal, but after a little solitude shall soon become a rational being again. To-morrow I shall expect a regular professional visit from you."

The doctor retired at once, left the house, and repaired to Lady Duke.

"We must act," he said, "without delay. He has now taken a suspicious fit, and ordered us to leave the house. His malady I fear, is gaining upon him."

"Why, what is the last symptom?" she asked, eagerly.

"Oh, many," he said, "and one the strongest and most significant; the sitting for hours tearing up papers into little fragments. He calls it tearing up his enemies! My sister was at the door and heard him. He wants to be alone altogether. But he is not fit to be left alone a moment."

"Then what is to be done?" said Lady Duke. "We must lose no time. I have seen Birkenshaw. He will see that everything is done legally and properly."

"He must be seen by another doctor. The opinion of two are necessary. I will get Craggs—a man," added Doctor Spooner, slowly, "who has had much experience in these matters, and who is independent of the parties here."

"But what must be the first step?" asked Lady Duke.

"It would be only proper to be in the house to take possession. He must be put under proper care, if it were only to interpose between him and others. I believe those Gardiners, at this very moment, have some design, and might slip in, and establish themselves. The wife is a very scheming person. I met him in the street

this morning, and I thought that he seemed to avoid me. Depend upon it they are at some crafty game. He is a poor creature, but she is very artful."

"It is unpleasant that one should have to struggle with such people in a matter of duty, but matters have come to this pass, that we cannot be delicate. This is my place, and I shall not shrink from taking it."

"Quite proper," said the doctor. "For this evening I can easily put him off."

"Or why not leave him altogether, as he desires?" said Lady Duke.

The doctor gave her a look of suspicion, but Lady Duke had spoken without any "hinder thought."

"Well, it might be done," said he, "but it would be a little dangerous. I think the true course for me would be to tell him his state boldly, and then what his nearest relations propose doing."

"And the Nagles?"

"Oh, they are out of the"—"running," he was going to say, but he felt it was an inappropriate word, so he substituted "business." "What right or title have they to interfere? They should not be tolerated for a moment. But, as I say, they are disposed of, and will give no more trouble. No; to-morrow will be time enough. I must then act formally in your name. After a few days he can be removed to a proper place, where he will be taken care of. I can see that all this will be very painful and disagreeable for you, but it really must be done."

This artful adviser put matters so that the lady really persuaded herself that she was acting in the business from honourable and high-souled motives, and putting herself forward to do what was painful, in the interests of the unhappy being himself. Thus did the pair meet and separate, having arranged some fresh stages in their plot.

CHAPTER XLIII. THE PROMPTER.

WILL GARDINER, after the plan which had been arranged with his wife, or rather which she had arranged for him, went his way in a troubled state of mind. He was not satisfied with himself. "I have kept my hands clean all my life, and done what is reputable," he said to himself; "have got a tolerably good name to hand down to my children, and now I must enter into this dirty plot against a poor sick devil who has been kind to me. I don't like it." But then, he thought, if "the poor

devil" was so mad—mad as any hatter—he was doing no more than some necessary legal ceremony, which was always more or less disagreeable and painful, but, all the same, must be done by some one. It would, to a certainty, be done by those harpies, "Duke and Co.," and he was, in reality, doing a rough sort of kindness in saving the poor fellow from them. And then, most potent argument of all, there was the bill of sale, the daily pressure of applications for money, which he knew not how to answer or to put off, to say nothing of the domestic pressure.

"Besides," said Will, as he walked along, bound for Mr. Doughty's, "the man is mad. Surely any one that could think of founding hospitals for cats is not fit to be intrusted with the disposal of large sums of money. He must be protected from himself."

As he was hurrying along to make his grand coup, and had just come to the corner of the street in which the victim lived, he came upon two figures, whose heads were laid close together, and who were talking earnestly. They started in a guilty fashion as he came up. It was the musician and the clerical brother.

"What are you two hatching there?" said Will, bitterly; "contriving how you will get at the goose with the golden eggs?"

"Oh, that won't do," said his brother. "That comes very well from you. Others are entitled to have their chance; the thing isn't to be made a monopoly of."

"Yes," said Mr. Nagle. "Arts have been used to cause divisions between me and my friend. His mind has been worked on, I can see. He has been set against me and my daughter. The whole town knows the footing we were on. It was patent."

"My good Nagle," said Will, with a forced laugh, "I am sorry for the failure; you did your best, and deserved to win; but what can you do? And my holy brother there—his sacred ministrations, I fear, must have been declined with thanks."

"This is a poor style of joke," answered the clergyman; "but it won't do. I know what work is going on, and the whole town knows it too."

"What d'ye mean, brother?" said Will, angrily; "you're talking folly."

"I mean the trying to make out that certain people are not sound in their intellects, and don't know what they are doing. We all know the object of that."

"A most nefarious scheme," said Mr. Nagle, warmly; "it's a wretched combination. He has one of the clearest and most collected heads that ever came into the world."

"Rubbish!" said Will, angrily; "haven't you been going about nodding and shrugging your shoulders, and telling every one that his wits were gone? My good do-re-mi-fa-sol friend, too many people heard you, for you to go back."

"Oh, things are exaggerated," said Mr. Nagle; "misconstruction was put on my harmless language."

"And as a clergyman, I really have a right to interfere. I cannot stand by and see an unfortunate man made a prey of in this way. It's too cruel."

"And unfair," said Will. "Unfair to you and your large family, who are not to have a finger in the pie. My dear, good, pious brother, take my advice, leave the thing alone; you and your friend Nagle here will make a very indifferent pair of contrivers. You will be pushed against the wall, and your little line of tactics is very poor and transparent. I see it perfectly. The whole place sees it; but it will be of no use."

"You forget yourself," said the clergyman, now very angry. "Let me tell you, you are considered in Brickford not to be so very clever after all. You haven't managed your own affairs so cleverly. Don't shout before you are out of the wood. I pay my bills weekly."

Will Gardiner gave him a furious look and passed on. The two affectionate brothers, when they next met in the street, passed each other without any sign of recognition.

CHAPTER XLIV. A CONVERSION.

MR. DOUGHTY, after his medical adviser had left him, fell into a strange state of excitement. It now flashed upon him in what peril he might be standing, "and good heavens," he thought, "if they should take any such step! I have read of such dreadful things! I am a poor helpless creature, here, quite at their mercy." He then thought of all their repeated visits, and curious looks, and their competing struggles to secure admission. He felt that he had literally no protection against any schemes they might have, and that he might be secured and carried away to a place of confinement where he might find no means of release. This idea threw him into an agony of terror, and for the

time banished all thoughts of his malady, and even of the mental sufferings he was enduring.

He thought of flight, but still the same sense of bitter helplessness pursued him. For if they were furnished with proper powers he could be pursued and captured. It was his money that was the prize; and in that pursuit they would allow no scruples to stand in the way. His illness and anxieties had diverted his thoughts from considering the determined watch that had been kept over him, and their mercenary anxiety to gain admission, a compliment that would not be paid to a poor and elderly bachelor of musical, and, perhaps, singular tastes. Putting everything together with his old sagacity, which had now returned to him unclouded, he felt by a sort of instinct that he had divined the true causes of all the late events that had attended his illness, and in his terror drops of perspiration broke out upon his forehead.

He felt that he must have all his powers ready to protect him. A sort of bitter dislike against those cruel conspirators took possession of him, and an eagerness to expose and defeat them took possession of him. He felt a new strength, and half the oppression of his illness left him. But at the same time he felt that he should have need of all his caution and self-restraint; for any emotion or show of resentment would only be welcomed, and be playing into their hands.

As these thoughts filled his mind, the door was suddenly opened, and one of the conspirators—for that character, indeed, was written on his face—stood before him. This was Will Gardiner, who, with a guilty air, had at last come to execute the task to which he had been stirred up by his wife. He had watched from the window of a neighbour's house, to whom he paid an unreasonably long visit for the purpose—the neighbour's window commanding the Doughty house—until he had seen the doctor go out; and he literally blushed as he thought of this mean shift to which he found himself obliged to have recourse. He then pushed past what he called the "she-Cerberus" at the door, not without a struggle, and made his way up-stairs. A trusty body servant, whom he had resolved to "put in possession," bailiff-like, was hanging about near the door, ready to enter on a proper signal; while in a street hard by flitted about his excellent and inspiring helpmate, as it were

shopping. To such an organised attempt had this amiable pair condescended.

Mr. Doughty started when he saw him.

"What do you want here?" he cried; "who allowed you to come in?"

"I just dropped in to see how you were getting on," said the other, confused, and in his mildest way.

"To see how I was getting on, on the road to incapacity and idiotcy. Do you find that I am not going fast enough? Are you all getting impatient?"

Much taken back at this strange speech, Will Gardiner could only falter out that he was glad to see that he was better.

The other did not answer for some moments. Then said slowly:

"I know perfectly well what is going on about me, and the schemes of which I am the object. I am not surprised that some of the people here should have thought of finding their account in making me their victim in this cruel plot; but I thought that you had too manly and open a nature to descend to such baseness."

Will Gardiner was silent for a few moments, colouring furiously.

"There is no plot, as you call it," he said; "but you know you have not been well, and that we have been anxious about you."

"And for that reason you would join the wretches that would seize on me, shut me up in a madhouse for the purpose of making me mad, and let me lie there for the rest of my life. I had thought better of you. I never injured you, that I am aware of, and always tried to be kind and good-natured to you; and I can assure you if I had been so fortunate as to have carried out the marriage I looked for, you at least would not have been a sufferer."

Will Gardiner was much moved and disturbed by these words. "I don't know what to say to you, Doughty, or what you will think of me. But as I sit here, in presence of Heaven, I thought, and I was told, that you were very bad indeed. There were speeches and things of yours reported which gave the idea, but," he added, warmly, "I believe that it is all a vile invention. I'll have nothing to do with it; I don't care what they say" (the "they" stood for Mrs. Gardiner); "I wash my hands of it all. God forgive me for listening to them a moment!"

"Then I am right," said Old Doughty, calmly. "There is some such plan on foot."

Will Gardiner looked down. "I would have you be on your guard," he said.

"Some sort of villany will be tried. I am ashamed of myself for having listened a moment to such things. But the truth was, as others were going to do it, we thought we might as well have a share. I know this explanation only makes matters worse for me, but still it is all the reparation I can offer. Be on your guard, I tell you," he added, rising; "they will try something to-day or to-morrow, and think as badly as you like of me, for I have behaved like a traitor."

"No, no," said the other, smiling; "but could you do nothing for me? How am I, a poor helpless being, to protect myself? You will not hand me over to their mercy? Will you not aid me?"

Will Gardiner shook his head. "No," he said, with some pride, "I had better not interfere. Strange motives will be imputed to me, but that is only the fitting penalty. I am ashamed of myself, indeed, though I am not so bad as you think. God bless you, Doughty, and yet I would like to stand by you if I could; but you know," he added in an appealing voice, "it was very hard to resist the pressure—every one at me; and I vow solemnly to you, if I had interfered, I would have stood between you and the rest. I know that I would."

"Do so now, then," said the other, gently. "I want some friend sadly. The odds are too much against me. I have been betrayed, deceived by those who were pretending to be my friends and comforters. It would be a satisfaction to baffle them."

"So it would," said Will, with his old impulse, then suddenly checked himself, as he thought how all that he said, and could say, was applicable to his own intended proceedings. He hung down his head with a guilty look, and again looked to the door. "No," he said, "Doughty, I had better leave you to yourself, and to your own devices. I would give the world to help you. But I don't want you to think more meanly of me than you do. And to the people here I will seem even yet more mean, if I ally myself with you."

"And why, pray?" said Mr. Doughty, with the same curious look; "because you will be supposed to have designs on me and my money? Speak candidly."

"Well, yes——"

"Then there is nothing to be apprehensive of on that score. Don't be afraid. By-and-bye will come some revelations that will amaze this wretched Brickford. Then nothing can be said that will affect you, I

assure you of this. I have but one aim now, and that is to baffle these miserable conspirators, and baffled they shall be—never fear; but I must have some one to stand by me and help me.”

Will Gardiner did not quite understand, but his brow cleared, and he seized on Mr. Doughty's hand and wrung it.

“Then what am I to do?” he asked. “Only tell me.”

“Stay with me as much as you can. Support me by pretending that you have the same scheme in view that they have. It will drive them to fury and desperation.”

Will Gardiner, always mercurial, entered with delight into this idea, and forgot all his own private distresses in the anticipated enjoyment. He forgot, also, the very important share he had proposed to take in these obnoxious schemes. However, he was a thorough creature of impulse, and illogical enough not to see this inconsistency.

Almost at once his newly-found advocacy was put to the test. Here was Doctor Spooner returned and ushered in by his sister, who had clearly been telling him outside of the intrusion.

“Stand by me now,” said Mr. Doughty, in a low voice, and with a trepidation owing to the enfeebling effect of his illness. “Now is the time to make a beginning.”

The doctor saw in their faces traces of the new alliance.

“You should not have come in,” he said. “You interfere with my treatment. I think it very bad taste, and my sister tells me you forced your way past.”

“I am here by the wish of your patient,” said Will, “and I mean to stay here—to come and go as he pleases.”

“Not without my sanction,” said the other; “so long at least as I am allowed to be in charge of his case.”

“I told you not to return,” said Mr. Doughty.

“That dismissal I cannot accept,” said the doctor, “until some one has been appointed to succeed me. Mr. Doughty is not in a fit state of health to be exposed to these intrusions. The responsibility is on me. He seems well now, and may be in a fair way of recovery, but these agitations and disturbances will have the worst effect. It is only a medical man that can understand this. And I call upon you now to withdraw.”

“Well, this is cool,” said Will Gardiner,

yet a little awed by the doctor's confident manner.

“Cool or not, I must protect Mr. Doughty from himself. I look on him now, and I say it to his face, as being in a weak and helpless state of mind, such as would readily render him liable to be the prey of the designing. Those designs I and my sister here shall oppose strenuously, at least until another physician shall be introduced.”

“This is going too far,” said Will Gardiner. “Do you dare to oppose him in his own house? Leave at once, sir. Shall I have him turned out, Doughty? Only say the word.”

“Better not attempt anything of the kind,” said Doctor Spooner, stepping back. “Mr. Doughty I am sure will give you the same advice, unless you have so excited him as to prevent his taking a calm view of the question. However that may be, I take the whole affair upon myself.”

“I think,” said Mr. Doughty, with a nervous manner that might have been assumed, “that Doctor Spooner is right. All this worries and excites me. My poor brain will go. All that I have passed through during these few weeks would have fitted me for a madhouse. Don't irritate Doctor Spooner,” added he, shading his eyes. “He will visit it on me if you go away.”

“I am not going away,” said Will Gardiner; “that is, I shall return, and stay here for the night. Let those who dare keep me out at their peril. You wish me to be with you?”

“Yes, yes, if Doctor Spooner does not object. I have plans, and a great deal of business to arrange. I want to devote such little money as I have to a charitable purpose. Before I die I suppose I shall do like other weak-minded beings, endow cats, and dogs, and colleges.”

The doctor's eyes kindled at these welcome words.

“No doubt,” he said. “The whole place is full of your supposed intentions, which are singular enough. But we shall see all about that in good time. Meanwhile Mr. Gardiner need not threaten. He can stay if he pleases, only he must take the responsibility on himself.”

“Cheerfully,” said Will.

The doctor retired. Will Gardiner took his friend's hand, and, after a short conversation, left the house. The counterplot had begun.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 230. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BORN AND THE BAY."

CHAPTER LXIII. AT THE THREE NUNS.

WHEN Richard Marston left me, his chaise stood at the door, with a team of four horses, quite necessary to pull a four-wheeled carriage over the fells, through whose gorges the road to the nearest railway station is carried.

The pleasant setting sun flashed over the distant fells, and glimmered on the pebbles of the court-yard, and cast a long shadow of Richard Marston as he stood upon the steps, looking down upon the yellow, worn flags, in dark thought.

"Here, put this in," he said, handing his only piece of luggage, a black leather travelling-bag, to one of the post-boys. "You know the town of Golden Friars?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, stop at Mr. Jarlot's house."

Away went the chaise, with its thin roll of dust, like the smoke of a hedge-fire, all along the road, till they pulled up at Mr. Jarlot's house.

Out jumped Mr. Marston, and knocked a sharp summons with the brass knocker on the hall-door.

The maid opened the door and stood at the step with a mysterious look of inquiry in Mr. Marston's face. The rumour that was already slowly spreading in Golden Friars had suddenly been made sure, by a telegraphic message from Lemuel Blount to Mr. Jarlot. His good wife had read it just five minutes before Mr. Marston's arrival.

"When is Mr. Jarlot to be home again?"

"Day after to-morrow, please, sir."

"Well, when he comes, don't forget to

tell him I called. No, this is better;" and he wrote, in pencil, on his card, the date and the words, "Called twice—most anxious to see Mr. Jarlot;" and laid it on the table.

"Can I see Mr. Spaight?" he inquired.

Tall, stooping Mr. Spaight, the confidential man, with his bald head, spectacles, and long nose, emerged politely, with a pen behind his ear, at this question, from the door of the front room, which was Mr. Jarlot's office.

"Oh! Mr. Spaight," said Richard Marston, "have you heard from Mr. Jarlot to-day?"

"A short letter, Mr. Marston, containing nothing of business; only a few items of news; he's in London till to-morrow; he saw Mr. Blount there."

"Then he has heard, of course, of our misfortune?"

"Yes, sir; and we all sympathise with you, Mr. Marston, deeply, sir, in your affliction. Will you please to step in, sir, and look at the letter?"

Mr. Marston accepted the invitation.

There were two or three sentences that interested him.

"I have had a conversation with Mr. Blount this morning. He fears very much that Sir Harry did not execute the will. I saw Messrs. Hutt and Babbage, who drafted the will; but they can throw no light upon the matter, and say that the result of a search, only, can; which Mr. Blount says won't take five minutes to make."

This was interesting; but the rest was rubbish. Mr. Marston took his leave, got into the chaise again, and drove under the windows of the George and Dragon, along the already deserted road that ascends the fells from the margin of the lake.

Richard Marston put his head from the window and looked back; there was no living creature in his wake. Before him he saw nothing but the post-boys' stooping backs, and the horses with their four patients' heads bobbing before him. The light was failing, still it would have served to read by for a little while; and there was something he was very anxious to read. He was irresolute; there was a risk in it; he could not make up his mind.

He looked at his watch; it would take him nearly three hours to reach the station at the other side of the fells. Unlucky the delay at Dorracklough!

The light failed. White mists began to crawl across the road and were spreading and rising fantastically on the hill-sides. The moon came out. He was growing more impatient. In crossing a mountain the eye measures so little distance gained for the time expended. This journey seemed, to him, interminable.

At one of the zig-zag turns of the road there rises a huge fragment of white stone, bearing a rude resemblance to a horseman; a highwayman, you might fancy him, awaiting the arrival of the travellers. In Richard's eye it took the shape of old Sir Harry Rokestone, as he used to sit, when he had reined in his tall iron-grey hunter, and was waiting to have a word with some one coming up.

He muttered something as he looked sternly ahead at this fantastic reminder.

On they drove; the image resolved itself into its rude sides and angles, and was passed; and the pale image of Sir Harry no longer waylaid his nephew.

Slowly the highest point of the road was gained, and then begins the flying descent; and the well-known landmarks, as he consults his watch, from time to time, by the moonlight, assure him that they will reach the station in time to catch the train.

He is there. He pays his post-boys, and with his black travelling-bag in hand, runs out upon the gravelled front, from which the platform extends its length.

"The up-train not come yet?" inquired the young man, looking down the line eagerly.

"Not due for four minutes, Mr. Marston," said the station-master, with officious politeness, "and we shall hardly have it up till some minutes later. They are obliged to slacken speed in the Malwyn cutting at present. Your luggage all right, I hope? Shall I get your ticket for you, Mr. Marston?"

The extraordinary politeness of the official had, perhaps, some connexion with the fact that the rumour of Sir Harry's death was there already, and the Rokestone estates extended beyond the railway. Richard Marston was known to be the only nephew of the deceased baronet, and to those who knew nothing of the interior politics of the family, his succession appeared certain.

Mr. Marston thanked him, but would not give him the trouble; he fancied that the station-master, who was perfectly innocent of any treacherous design, wished to play the part of a detective, and find out all he could about his movements and belongings.

Richard Marston got away from him as quickly as he civilly could, without satisfying his curiosity on any point. The train was up, and the doors clapping a few minutes later; and he, with his bag, rug, and umbrella, got into his place, with a thin, sour old lady in black, opposite; a nurse at one side, with two children in her charge, who were always jumping down on peoples' feet, or climbing up again, and running to the window, and bawling questions with incessant clamour; and, at his other side, a mummy-coloured old gentleman with an olive-green cloth cap, the flaps of which were tied under his chin, and a cream-coloured muffler.

He had been hoping for a couple of hours' quiet; perhaps a tenantless carriage. This state of things for a man in search of meditation was disappointing.

They were now, at length, at Dykham. A porter in waiting, from the inn called the Three Nuns, took Marston's bag and rug, and led the way to that house, only fifty yards off, where he took up his quarters for the night.

He found Mr. Blount's promised letter from London there. He did not wait for candles and his sitting-room. In his hat and overcoat, by the gas-light at the bar, he read it breathlessly. It said substantially what Mr. Jarlcot's letter had already told him, and nothing more. It was plain, then, that Sir Harry had left every one in the dark as to whether he had or had not executed the will.

In answer to the waiter's hospitable inquiries about supper, he said he had dined late. It was not true; but it was certain that he had no appetite.

He got a sitting-room to himself; he ordered a fire, for he thought the night chilly. He had bought a couple of books, two or three magazines, and as many news-

papers. He had his window curtains drawn; and their agreeable smell of old tobacco smoke assured him that there could be no objection to his cigar.

"I'll ring when I want anything," he said; "and, in the mean time, let me be quiet."

It was here, when he had been negotiating for Sir Harry the renewal of certain leases to a firm in Dykham, that the telegraph had brought him the startling message, and Mr. Blount said in the same message that he was writing particulars by that day's post.

Mr. Marston had not allowed grass to grow under his feet, as you see; and he was now in the same quarters, about to put the case before himself, with a thorough command of its facts.

CHAPTER LXIV. THE WILL.

CANDLES lighted, shutters closed, curtains drawn, and a small but cheerful fire flickering in the grate. The old-fashioned room looked pleasant; Richard Marston was nervous and not like himself. He looked over the "deaths" in the papers, but Sir Harry's was not among them. He threw the papers one after the other on the table, and read nothing.

He got up and stood with his back to the fire. He looked like a man who had got a chill, whom nothing could warm, who was in for a fever. He was in a state he had not anticipated; he almost wished he had left undone the things he had done.

He bolted the door; he listened at it; he tried it with his hand. He had something in his possession that embarrassed and almost frightened him, as if it had been some damning relic of a murdered man.

He sat down and drew from his breast-pocket a tolerably bulky paper, a law paper with a piece of red tape about it, and a seal affixing the tape to the paper. The paper was indorsed in pencil, in Sir Harry's hand, with the words, "Witnessed by Darby Mayne and Hugh Fenwick," and the date followed.

A sudden thought struck him. He put the paper into his pocket again, and made a quiet search of the room, even opening and looking into the two old cupboards, and peeping behind the curtains to satisfy his nervous fancy that no one was concealed there.

Then again he took out the paper, cut the tape, broke the seal, unfolded the broad document, and holding it extended in both hands, read, "The last will and testament

of Sir Harry Rokestone, of Dorracleugh, in the County of —, Baronet."

Here then was the great sacrilege. He stood there with the spoils of the dead in his hands. But there was no faltering now in his purpose.

He read on: "I, Harry Rokestone, &c., Baronet, of Dorracleugh, &c., being of sound mind, and in good health, do make this, my last will," &c.

And on and on he read, his face darkening.

"Four trustees," he muttered, and read on for awhile, for he could not seize its effect as rapidly and easily as an expert would. "Well, yes, two thousand two hundred pounds sterling by way of annuity—annuity!—to be paid for the term of his natural life, in four equal sums, on the first of May, the first of August—yes, and so on—as a first charge upon all the said estates, and so forth. Well, what else?"

And so he went on humming and humming over the paper, and his head slowly turning from side to side, as he read.

"And Blount to have two hundred a year! I guessed that old Methodist knew what he was about; and then there's the money. What about the money?" He read on as before. "Five thousand pounds. Five thousand for me! Upon my soul! out of one hundred and twenty thousand pounds in government stock. That's modest, all things considered, and an annuity just of two thousand two hundred a year for my life, the rental of the estates, as I happen to know, being nearly nine thousand." This he said with a sneering, uneasy chuckle. "And that is all!"

And he stood erect, holding the paper by the corner between his finger and thumb, and letting it lie against his knee.

"And everything else," he muttered, "land and money, without exception, goes to Miss Ethel Ware. She the lady of the fee; I a poor annuitant!"

He was half stifled with rage and mortification.

"I see now, I see what he means. I see the drift of the whole thing. I see my way. I mustn't make a mistake, though—there can't be any. Nothing can be more distinct."

He folded up the will rapidly, and replaced it in his pocket.

Within the last half-hour his forehead had darkened, and his cheeks had hollowed. How strangely these subtle muscular contractions correspond with the dominant moral action of the moment!

He took out another paper, a very old one, worn at the edges, and indorsed "Case on behalf of Richard Rokestone Marston, Esquire." I suppose he had read it at least twenty times that day, during his journey to Dorraclough. "No, nothing on earth can be clearer or more positive," he thought. "The whole thing is as plain as that two and two make four. It covers everything."

There were two witnesses to this will corresponding with the indorsement, each had signed in presence of the other; all was technically exact.

Mr. Marston had seen and talked with these witnesses on his arrival at Dorraclough, and learned enough to assure him that nothing was to be apprehended from them.

They were persons in Sir Harry's employment, and Sir Harry had called them up on the day that the will was dated, and got them to witness in all about a dozen different documents, which they believed to be leases, but were not sure. Sir Harry had told them nothing about the nature of the papers they were witnessing, and had never mentioned a will to them. Richard Marston had asked Mrs. Shackleton also, and she had never heard Sir Harry speak of a will.

While the news of Sir Harry's death rested only upon a telegraphic message, which might be forged or precipitate, he dared not break the seal and open the will. Mr. Blount's and Mr. Jarlcot's letters, which he had read this evening, took that event out of the possibility of question.

He was safe also in resolving a problem that was now before him.

Should he rest content with his annuity and five thousand pounds, or seize the entire property by simply destroying the will?

If the will were allowed to stand, he might count on my fidelity, and secure possession of all it bequeathed by marrying me. He had only to place the will somewhere in Sir Harry's room where it would be sure to be found, and the affair would proceed in its natural course without more trouble to him.

But Mr. Blount was appointed, with very formidable powers, my guardian, and one of his duties was to see, in the event of my marrying, that suitable settlements were made, and that there was no reasonable objection to the candidate for my hand.

Mr. Blount was a quiet but very reso-

lute man in all points of duty. Knowing what was Sir Harry's opinion of his nephew, would he, within the meaning of the will, accept him as a suitor against whom no reasonable objection lay? And even if this were got over, Mr. Blount would certainly sanction no settlement which did not give me as much as I gave. My preponderance of power, as created by the will, must therefore be maintained in the settlement. I had no voice in the matter; and thus it seems, that in most respects, even by marriage, the operation of the will was inexorable. Why, then, should the will exist? and why, with such a fortune and liberty within his grasp, should he submit to conditions that would fetter him?

Even the pleasure of depriving Mr. Blount of his small annuity, ridiculous as such a consideration seemed, had its influence. He was keenly incensed with that officious and interested agent. The vicar, in their first conversation, had opened his eyes as to the action of that pretended friend.

"Mr. Blount told me, just before he left this," said the good vicar, "that he had been urging and even entreating Sir Harry for a long time to execute a will, which he had by him, requiring nothing but his signature, but, as yet, without success, and that he feared he would never do it."

Now approached the moment of decision.

He had read a trial in the newspapers long before, in which a curious case was proved. A man in the position of a gentleman had gone down to a deserted house that belonged to him, for the express purpose of there destroying a will which would have injuriously affected him.

He had made up his mind to destroy it, but he was haunted with the idea that, do it how he might in the village where he lived, one way or other the crime would be discovered. Accordingly he visited, with many precautions, this old house, which was surrounded closely by a thick wood. From one of the chimneys a boy, in search of jackdaws, saw one little puff of smoke escape, and his curiosity being excited, he climbed to the window of the room to which the chimney corresponded, and peeping in, he saw something flaming on the hob, and near it a man, who started, and hurriedly left the room on observing him.

Fancying pursuit, the detected man took his departure, without venturing to return to the room.

The end of the matter was, that his journey to the old house was tracked, and not only did the boy identify him, and tell his suspicious story, but the charred pieces of burnt paper found upon the hob, having been exposed to chemical action, had revealed the writing, a portion of which contained the signatures of the testator and the witnesses, and these and other parts thus rescued, identified it with the original draft in possession of the dead man's attorney. Thus the crime was proved, and the will set up and supplemented by what, I believe, is termed secondary evidence.

Who could be too cautious, then, in such a matter? It seemed as hard to hide away effectually all traces of a will destroyed as the relics of a murder.

Again he was tempted to spare the will, and rest content with an annuity and safety. It was but a temptation, however, and a passing one.

He unbolted the door softly, and rang the bell.

The waiter found him extended on a sofa, apparently deep in his magazine.

He ordered tea—nothing else; he was precise in giving his order; he did not want the servant pottering about his room; he had reasons for choosing to be specially quiet.

The waiter returned with his tea-tray, and found him buried, as before, in his magazine.

"Is everything there?" inquired Richard Marston.

"Everything there? Yes, sir, everything."

"Well, then, you need not come again till I touch the bell."

The waiter withdrew.

Mr. Marston continued absorbed in his magazine for just three minutes. Then he rose softly, stepped lightly to the door, and listened.

He bolted it again; tried it, and found it fast.

In a moment the will was in his hand. He gave one dark, searching look round the room, and then he placed the document in the very centre of the embers. He saw it smoke sullenly, and curl and slowly warp, and spring with a faint sound, that made him start, more than ever cannon did, into sudden flame. That little flame seemed like a bale-fire to light up the broad sky of night with a vengeful flicker, and throw a pale glare over the wide parks and mosses, the forests, fells, and meres, of dead Sir

Harry's great estate; and when the flame leaped up and died, it seemed that there was no light left in the room, and he could see nothing but the myriad little worms of fire wriggling all over the black flakes which he thrust, like struggling enemies, into the hollow of the fire.

Richard Marston was a man of redundant courage, and no scruple. But have all men some central fibre of fear that can be reached, and does the ghost of the conscience they have killed within them sometimes rise and overshadow them with horror? Richard Marston, with his feet on the fender and the tongs in his hands, pressed down the coals upon the ashes of the will, and felt faint and dizzy, as he had done on the night of the shipwreck, when, with bleeding forehead, he had sat down for the first time in the steward's house at Malory.

An event as signal had happened now. After nearly ten minutes had passed, during which he had never taken his eyes off the spot where the ashes were glowing, he got up and took the candle down to see whether a black film of the paper had escaped from the grate. Then stealthily he opened the window to let out any smell of burnt paper.

He lighted his cigar, and smoked; unbolted the door, rang the bell, and ordered brandy-and-water. The suspense was over, and the crisis past.

He was resolved to sit there till morning to see that fire burnt out.

SOUND AND FURY—SIGNIFYING SOMETHING.

To the cultivated mind lodged in the healthy body of one whose nerves are not too finely and sensitively strung, all the great sounds of nature are delightful. The thunder-peal—the rush and beat of waves upon the beach—the roar of the cataract, or the moan of the stormy wind among the forest trees, make divine music to the souls of all lovers of nature. There are some persons to whom the sublime reverberations of the thunder seem, as they were told perhaps in their infancy, to be the voice of God, speaking to the wicked, and in whose breasts the awful sound excites emotions more of terror than admiration; but educated people, and especially those of poetic and imaginative temperament, generally find a solemn joy in listening to a thunder-storm, and feel with Byron that "night and storm and darkness are wondrous strong,

but lovely in their strength." Thunder has inspired some of the noblest passages in the works of the greatest poets of all ages; not among the least sublime of which is to be found in the grand description by King David of the wrath of God in the eighteenth psalm. But even those who cannot banish from their minds the idea of danger in a thunder-storm, and for that reason cannot share the raptures which Byron has so fervently expressed, enjoy the roar of waters—whether they beat upon the sea, or descend from a height, as at Niagara, or a thousand other cataracts of less volume and celebrity. "The fall of waters as they howl and hiss, and boil in endless torture," excites no emotions of personal terror in him who wanders in safety by the shore, or stands upon terra firma amid the spray of the exulting and abounding river. The billows vainly spending their force against the land intone a mighty psalmody, in unison with the emotions of a fervent and reverent spirit, while the more monotonous chant of the waterfall seems to sing a similar hymn of power, of majesty, and of eternity. The idea of noise does not enter into the mind in view of these master-works of creation, though the idea of sound, grand, majestic, and superhuman, pervades the imagination. The sough and swell of the wintry winds among the leafless branches of the trees is also grand in the extreme, and awakens any poetic feeling that may be latent in the spirit of the listener. Indeed, it may be said of those who are insensible to the charms of such melancholy music, that they are shut out from the enjoyment of an innocent and exalting pleasure, that they live in the outer and not in the inner circles of the spiritual life, and have no fine sympathies with surrounding nature.

In hard and disagreeable contrast with the sounds of solitude and the country, are the noises of society and the town. It may be granted that the shout of an excited multitude almost equals in grandeur of effect the thunder-clap of the skies; but the great sound is seldom heard, and when heard in less happy countries than our own, is but too often likely to be accompanied by the lightning-flash of a street revolution. The four great noises of civilisation are the ringing of church bells, the shriek of the railway whistle, the beating of gongs, and the firing of cannon in honour of the arrival or departure of royal personages, or the celebration of royal birthdays. The first of these noises is not without its pleasing

effects upon the mind. The last three are barbarous and abominable, and more suggestive of the savage than of the civilised character.

Mr. Ruskin, who has his idiosyncrasies, as all the world knows—at least all that portion of the world which reads and appreciates good English—has lately been stirred up to some very amiable wrath on the subject of the noises made by church bells. Mr. Ruskin will find few to sympathise with him in his dislike of those instruments. Whatever may be their effect in the crowded streets of cities, no person of taste and imagination can hear them sounding from afar, over field and dell, woodland and river, from the belfry of some village church, without the pleasantest emotions. And even in cities their effect is sometimes delightful. Nothing, for instance, can be grander and more solemn than the voice of Big Ben in the clock tower at Westminster, sounding forth the twelve magnificent vibrations that tell the belated or the sleepless Londoner that it is midnight. We have all of us, in our time, shared the feeling expressed by Thomas Moore:

Those evening bells, those evening bells,
How many a tale their music tells,
Of hope and love and that sweet time
When first we heard their joyous chime.

In like manner the Bonnie Christ Church Bells and the Bells of Aberdovey, and a score of other pleasant tunes and dainty lyrics, recal the sweet recollections of the happiest time in all people's lives—the time when they were young and hopeful, and looked towards the future with the brilliant anticipations which are never to be fully realised. The music of the far off chimes takes the tone of the listener's mind, and responds alike to his joy and sadness. And if we frame into words what the bells say to us, they invariably take the meaning we wish to give them. The bells of Bow Church but repeated to young Richard Whittington, as he rested on Highgate Rise, the thoughts that were passing through his mind. Doubtless in after-life they aided the ripening of the thought into action, and helped the prophecy to produce its own fulfilment:

When with care-untroubled mind
We hear the chimes upon the wind—
One, two, and three!
Oh merrily!
Four, five, six, seven,
From earth to heaven!
One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight!
The joy bells storm its opening gate.
'Tis from our thought they take their measure,
And ring in sympathy of pleasure.

No! Mr. Ruskin, all the denunciation in the world will never persuade the world that the chime and peal of church bells, especially when mellowed by distance, are other than pleasant to the ear and to the imagination.

But the three other noises of civilisation above specified may well be called barbarous, and merit all the reprobation which Mr. Ruskin, or any one else, can bestow. Whether the railway whistle, the gong, or the firing of cannon is the most diabolical of sounds, it is difficult to decide. I for one can imagine no purgatorial torture more intense than would be the incessant repetition of any of the three for any long period of time. Madness would be the result of twenty-four hours' endurance of such unutterable misery to any persons whose nerves were of softer texture than the cranks of a steam-engine. It is my pleasure to live in the country, and it is my business to come frequently to town. Whenever I arrive at, or depart from, the London Bridge terminus of the South-Eastern, and of the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railways, my ears are perpetually assailed—I might, without exaggeration, say pierced—by the short, sharp, sudden shriek of the steam-whistle, notifying the egress or ingress of a train. The sensation sends a pang through my nervous system; my teeth jar, and my hands involuntarily rise to my ears to deaden the excruciating sound. Why, I should like to know, cannot we shut our ears instinctively against odious noises—as we can shut our eyes against painful sights by a mere effort of the will? Such an improvement on the human frame divine might lengthen the days of many a railway traveller, and render them more agreeable while they lasted. In the northern parts of England a steam horn used to be employed—perhaps is employed still—to give warning that the train was about to start; a warning which was quite as effective, though by no means so startling, as the demoniacal whistle. A porter, into whose good opinion I have ingratiated myself by sundry sixpences and pints of beer, informed me, in reply to something not at all like a blessing which escaped my lips the other day when the shriek of the whistle was more than usually sharp, that upon an average the whistle was sounded about once a minute all day long, and a great part of the night. If it were not for a drop of beer now and then to strengthen his nerves, he couldn't stand it. One poor

fellow, a mate of his, had petitioned the company to be removed from London Bridge to some quieter station, as he was afraid he should be driven mad. After a month or so he was called before some official or other, who told him that he was an ass, and might leave the service any day he liked, and so make way for somebody with robuster nerves, or with no nerves at all. "But your Jacks-in-office," added the porter, "is always insulting to poor people."

But such is the hubbub of noise in many of our manufacturing towns and cities, that it has become difficult to summon the workpeople in some of the great factories by the ringing of a bell, as used to be the former practice. So the steam-whistle has been brought into requisition for the purpose, and sends its shrill alarm through the swarming alleys and streets where the workers reside, vexing the ears of invalids and studious people residing at a distance. The result has been several actions at law against the disturbers of the public quiet, which have, for the most part, been decided against the whistle and its owners. But of all the agony which the shriek of the steam-whistle is capable of inflicting, the agony of hearing it in a fog on the Atlantic is the most intense. It was once my ill fortune to be on board a large steamer, scudding along at the rate of twelve knots an hour in the midst of a dense fog off the coast of Labrador, and to hear the steam-whistle sounded once every two minutes, for more than twelve hours, to give notice to any possible vessel that might be speeding on in the opposite direction, that there was danger of collision. When we got clear of the fog at last, and steamed out into an open atmosphere, and could see the ocean before us, and the blue sky above, the sensation of relief that came from the silencing of the whistle was positively divine, and confirmed me in the belief that of all the pleasures of this world, there is none greater than the cessation of pain.

It may be remembered that in the first war which Great Britain declared against the Chinese empire, the Chinese endeavoured to frighten away our squadron by beating gongs upon the shore. Bad however as the gong is, it is not so grievous an infliction as the steam-whistle. It is heard nowhere but in hotels and great houses, and then only to summon people to breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Outsiders do not hear it, and it is only a nuisance for a short time, and within a limited sphere. Tea, that we

borrowed from the Chinese, is so choice a blessing of civilisation as to make us wonder how our ancestors could have done without it. But how we ever could have been so stupid as to borrow from their barbarism such an instrument as the gong is a matter for still greater amazement.

As for the firing of salutes in honour of the arrival or departure of great personages, or of the birthdays of kings, emperors, and other sovereigns, I agree with the erudite Baron Grimbois, late governor of Baratania, that it is a barbarous practice, very odious and painful, that seems to be founded on the childish and uncivilised notion that a great noise is symbolical of a great joy. If any minister of Great Britain, whether he be of the Liberal or the Conservative party, instead of paring down the small salaries of ill-paid clerks in the public offices, with a view to the proper economy of the public money, will order an account to be taken of the sums of money that are squandered on the useless, noisy, wasteful blazing away of gunpowder, he will be surprised to find how many thousands of pounds per annum are thus puffed out into infinite space, with a bad noise and a bad smell, without doing any good to anybody but the gunpowder manufacturers. The ringing of bells is celestial music as compared with the infernal din of artillery. Speak up, Mr. Ruskin! Let the world hear what you have to say on the subject of the three hideous noises, either of which heard singly is a thousand times more distressing than the jangle of all the bells that were ever rung in the world since bells were invented.

MERMAIDS.

SAILORS and seaside folk have always had a tendency to believe in mermaids. They see more varieties of fish, and stranger forms of amphibia, than landmen; and, moreover, they enjoy marvellous stories about wonderful things. Classical writers tell us that the Sirens were two maidens who sat by the sea, and so charmed with their music all who sailed by, that the fascinated wayfarers remained on the spot till they died. The Sirens (afterwards increased to three in number, and called by various names) are supposed to have had much to do with mermaids—that is, people who believed in the one had no difficulty in believing in the other.

Tracing down, century after century, we

find an abundance of mermaid stories, vouched for with all the gravity of genuine belief. In an old book descriptive of Holland, the reader is told that in 1480 a tempest broke through the embankments of the low-lying districts, and covered much meadow and pasture land with water. Some maidens of the town of Edam, in West Friesland, going in a boat over the flooded land to milk their cows, perceived a mermaid entangled in the mud and shallow water. They took her into the boat, and brought her with them to Edam, dressed her in woman's apparel, and taught her to spin. She fed like one of them, but could not be brought to speak. Some time afterwards she was brought to Haarlem, where she lived for several years, though still showing an inclination for the water. "They had given it," we are further informed, "some notion of a deity; and it made its reverences very devoutly whenever it passed by a crucifix."

In 1560, on the west coast of Ceylon, some fishermen brought up at one draught of a net "seven mermen and maids," which a Jesuit missionary certified to be veritable types of human beings—excepting, we suppose, in regard to fish-shaped tails. This tail question was, in the same century, settled in a peculiar manner by engravers and herald painters. Mermaids with two tails were often engraved in French and German books on heraldry; a double-tailed mermaid was engraved in a Swiss edition of Ptolemy's Geography, published in 1540; and the Venetian printers had a liking for the same kind of symbol on their title-pages.

Mary Queen of Scots was made the butt of numerous caricatures, some of which represented her in the character of a mermaid, sitting on a dolphin. One has been discovered in the State Paper Office—a mean and unmanly production, intended to cast ridicule on a woman who could not defend herself from its effects. It is supposed that Shakespeare, writing some years after the appearance of this caricature, had it in his mind when he created the Midsummer Night's Dream. Oberon says to Puck:

Thou remember'st
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back,
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres
To hear the sea-maid's music.

We well know that Shakespeare made many of his characters talk about mermaids and sea-sirens—"I'll draw more

sailors than the mermaids shall;" "I'll stop mine ear against the mermaid's song;" "At the helm a seeming mermaid steers;" "Oh, train me not, 'sweet mermaid, with the note!" "Her clothes spread wide, and mermaid-like awhile they bore her up"—are passages well-known to readers of Shakespeare. Nor are musical folk less acquainted with the charming air which Haydn gave to the mermaid's song, where the siren of the sea says to some enchanted mortal,

Come with me, and we will go
Where the rocks of coral grow.

An almanack for 1688 gravely told its readers, "Near the place where the famous Dee payeth its tribute to the German Ocean, if curious observers of wonderful things in nature will be pleased to resort thither on the 1st, 13th, and 29th of May, and in divers other times in the ensuing summer, as also in the harvest time to the 7th and 14th of October, they will undoubtedly see a pretty company of Mar Maids, creatures of admirable beauty, and likewise hear their charming, sweet, melodious voices." The prognosticator kindly tells us the exact song which these Scottish mermaids would sing; it was nothing less than a new version of God Save the King; but as the year 1688 was rather a critical one in matters dynastic, we are left somewhat in doubt whether the king to be thus honoured was James the Second or William of Orange. At any rate, the mermaids were pious as well as loyal, for one of the things they were to do was "To extol their Maker, and His bounty praise." About the same time, Merollo, a Spaniard or Italian, who made a voyage to Congo, told the readers of his narrative that he saw, in the sea, "some beings like unto men, not only in their figures, but likewise in their actions; for we saw them plainly gather a great quantity of a certain herb, with which they immediately plunged themselves into the sea." The sailors tried to catch them in a net, but the mermen were too wide awake—"they lifted up the net, and made their escape."

In 1701, according to Brand's Description of the Orkney and Shetland Islands, "A boat at the fishing drew her lines; and one of them, as the fishers thought, having some great fish upon it, was with greater difficulty than the rest raised from the ground. But when raised, it came more easily to the surface of the water; upon which a creature like a mermaid presented itself at the side of the boat. It had the

face, arms, breast, and shoulders of a woman, and long hair hanging down the back; but the nether part was beneath the water, so that they could not understand the shape thereof. The two fishers who were in the boat being surprised at this strange sight, one of them unadvisedly drew a knife and thrust it into her bosom, whereupon she cried, as they judged, 'Alas!' The hook giving way, she fell backward, and was no more seen; the hook being big, went in at her chin and out at the upper lip." Brand did not see all this; indeed, most of the mermaid stories come second or third hand. The fishers told a baillie, to whom the boat belonged, the baillie told a lady, and the lady told Mr. Brand. The man who cruelly stabbed the poor mermaid was much troubled afterwards. "He is now dead, and, as was observed, never prospered after this, but was haunted by an evil spirit in the appearance of an old man, who, as he thought, used to say unto him, 'Will ye do such a thing? Who killed the woman?' The other man then in the boat is yet alive in the isle of Burra." The man was certainly more like a brute than a fisherman, or he would not have drawn his knife for such a purpose; whether human or non-human, she would have been worth more to him alive than dead, even as an exhibition to villagers at a baubee a head.

In 1737, according to a Scottish magazine, the crew of a ship newly arrived in the Thames from the East Indies, reported that in the island of Mauritius they had partaken of a mermaid, the flesh of which was a good deal like veal. The mermaid weighed three or four hundredweight—rather a buxom specimen! The head was particularly large, and so were the features, which differed but little from those of a man or woman. The story tells of two of them, one with a beard four or five inches long, the other much more feminine. "When they are first taken," the narrator proceeds to say, "which is often on the ground, they cry and grieve with great sensibility." About the same time a story came from Vigo in Spain to the effect that some fishermen on that coast had caught a sort of merman, five feet and a half from head to foot. The head was like that of a goat, with a long beard and moustaches, a black skin, somewhat hairy, a very long neck, short arms, hands longer and larger than they ought to be in proportion, and long fingers, with nails like claws, webbed toes, and a fin at the lower part of the back.

The magazines for 1775 gave an account of a mermaid which was captured in the Levant, and brought to London. One of the learned periodicals gravely told its readers that the mermaid had the complexion and features of a European, like those of a young woman; that the eyes were light blue, the nose small and elegantly formed, the mouth small, the lips thin, "but the edges of them round like those of a codfish;" that the teeth were small, regular, and white; that the neck was well rounded; and that the ears were like those of the eel, "but placed like those of the human species, with gills for respiration, which appear like curls." There was no hair on the head, but "rolls, which, at a distance, might be mistaken for curls." There was a fin rising pyramidally from the temples, "forming a foretop, like that of a lady's head-dress." The bust was nearly like that of a young damsel, a proper orthodox mermaid, but, alas! all below the waist was exactly like a fish. Three sets of fins below the waist, one above the other, enabled her to swim. Finally, "It is said to have an enchanting voice, which it never exerts except before a storm." The writer in the Annual Register probably did not see this mermaid, which the Gentleman's Magazine described as being only three feet high. It was afterwards proved to be a cheat, made from the skin of the angle-shark.

A Welsh farmer named Reynolds, living at Pen-y-hold in 1782, saw a something which he appears to have believed to be a mermaid; he told the story to Doctor George Phillips, who told it to Mrs. Moore, who told it to a young lady pupil of hers, who wrote out an account of it for Mrs. Morgan, who inserted it in her Tour to Milford Haven. How much the story gained on its travels—like the Three Black Crows, or the parlour game of Russian Scandal—we are left to find out for ourselves; but its ultimate form was nearly as follows. One morning, just outside the cliff, Reynolds saw what seemed to him to be a person bathing in the sea, with the upper part of the body out of the water. On nearer view, it looked like the upper part of a person in a tub, a youth, say, of sixteen or eighteen years of age, with nice white skin; a sort of brownish body, and a tail, were under the water. The head and body were human in form, but the arms and hands thick in proportion to length, while the nose, running up high between the eyes,

terminated rather sharply. The mysterious being looked attentively at Reynolds, and at the cliffs, and at the birds flying in the air, with a wild gaze; but uttered no cry. Reynolds went to bring some companions to see the merman or mermaid; but when he returned it had disappeared. If we like to suppose that Reynolds had seen some kind of seal, and that the narration had grown to something else by repetition from mouth to mouth, perhaps we shall not be very far wrong.

The present century, like its predecessors, has had its crop of mermaid stories, reappearing from time to time. In 1809, one of these strange beings made its appearance off the coast of Caithness, in Scotland. The particulars we have not at hand; but it happens to be on record by what channels the narrative reached the public. Two servant girls and a boy saw something in the water which they decided must be a mermaid; they mentioned it to Miss Mackey, who wrote of it to Mrs. Jones, who showed the letter to Sir John Sinclair, who showed it to a gentleman, who caused the statement to be inserted in a newspaper. The Philosophical Society brought these facts to light. Even so grave a publication as Rees's Cyclopædia, in 1819, said, "We have a well-attested account of a merman near the great rock called Diamond, on the coast of Martinique. The persons who saw it gave in a precise description of it before a notary. They affirm that they saw it wipe its hands over its face, and even heard it blow its nose."

Bartholomew Fair was of course not without its mermaid—more or less like a fish, as the case might be. In 1822, the fashionable West-end had given half-crowns to see a mermaid. It was a clumsy and barefaced piece of workmanship, made up chiefly of a dried monkey's head and body, and a fish's tail; and was altogether about as ugly an affair as ever drew silly people to an exhibition. After a career of half-crowns, the show came down to a shilling admission fee; and although naturalists and journalists were not slow in exposing the fraud, the success was considerable; for, we are told, "three to four hundred people every day pay their shilling each to see a disgusting sort of compound animal, which contains in itself everything that is odious and disagreeable." A drawing of this precious production, as exhibited in an upright glass case, was etched at the time by Cruikshank. The mermaid gradually

went down in dignity, until at length she became a penny show at Bartholomew Fair in 1825. How many mermaids there are at this present moment boxed up in caravans rambling from one country fair to another, it would be hard to guess; but some there are, beyond question.

Our own pages contained, about eight years ago,* a narrative tending to show that a belief in mermaids still lingers in our western maritime counties.

Some naturalists have pointed out characteristics in marine animals which afford a very probable groundwork for many of the current mermaid stories. Witness Sir J. E. Tennent's account of the dugong: "The rude approach to the human outline, observed in the shape of the head of the creature, and the attitude of the mother while suckling her young, holding it to her breast with one flipper, while swimming with the other, holding the heads of both above water; and when disturbed, suddenly diving and displaying her fish-like tail—these, together with her habitual demonstrations of strong maternal affection, probably gave rise to the fable of the mermaid." Woman or fish, normal or abnormal, the mermaid has taken a good hold of poets and composers, interlude writers and farce writers; and the Mermaid in Fleet-street was one of the famous old taverns of past days. The orthodox mermaid has, of course, a comely maiden's face, with beautiful hair, which she is combing with one hand, while in the other she holds a looking-glass.

NEAR THE END.

O THE wild days of youth! the dear dead days!
Dark are the lights and all the chorus dumb,
And cold and faintly through the gath'ring haze
Of this sad twilight time thin echoes come,
And wand'ring voices haunt the glimmering ways.

Sitting alone in these last empty years,
Life, starved and dwindled, tells its old tales o'er,
And, like a wind, the Past sings in mine ears,
And, like a wind, goes by. Alas! no more
For me the glad green Spring of smiles and tears!

Oft from the dreamland of the Long Ago,
Pale faces seek me with their eager eyes,
And fain I'd follow them, and fain would know,
How fares it with them 'neath the starless skies
That brood above the silent shades below.

Brave souls and beautiful! to what forlorn
Mute fields of Death's cold kingdom are ye passed?
O dreary Death, that hath nowhere forborne,
To pluck earth's fairest flowers and o'ercast
Sweet scents and colours with relentless scorn!

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, First Series, vol. xiii, p. 333.

Ah me! A little while the evening light
Shall linger wanly in the western sky:
A little while before my falt'ring sight
The pallid day shall glimmer ere it die.
Then, dumbly-dark, shall fall all-ending night.

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH (THE CONNAUGHT RANGERS).

PERHAPS no British regiment has done so many gallant deeds in so short a time as the Eighty-eighth, and no men have fought with more brilliant courage or with a gayer heart. In 1793, when our ill-judged war with revolutionary France led to the enrolling of ten fresh regiments, the Eighty-eighth was raised chiefly in pugnacious Connaught, and the Honourable Thomas de Burgh (afterwards Earl of Clanricarde) was appointed colonel. The facings were yellow, and the regiment was to bear on its colours and appointments an Irish harp and a crown, with the motto of the order of St. Patrick, "Quis separabit."

In the disastrous campaign of the Duke of York in Flanders, the Eighty-eighth, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Keppel—and one thousand strong—had ample share of the blows and hardships; but under such a general as the duke no glory could possibly be gained. Two companies of the Eighty-eighth fought in the West Indies in 1795, and in Egypt in 1801, and returned to England, with a fighting Irishman's luck, on the very day war broke out again with France. An old colonel of the Eighty-eighth, General Reid, then in his eighty-second year, though very deaf and infirm, at once volunteered his services against the French, on whom, in his letter to the adjutant-general, he thanked God he "had never turned his back." In 1806, the regiment joined the South American expedition under Brigade-General Sir Robert Crawford, and sailed for Monte Video, then occupied by the unfortunate Lieutenant-General Whitelock. At the final review in Crowhurst Park, near Hastings, Sir Arthur Wellesley said to the Eighty-eighth:

"I wish to God I was going with you! I am sure you will do your duty, ay, and distinguish yourselves too."

In the irrational assault on Buenos Ayres the Connaught Rangers were divided into two wings, one under Lieutenant-Colonel Duff, the other under Major Vandeleur. The order was to march on the city, to seize the houses on the river banks, and to form on the flat roofs. At half past six A.M., the right wing formed in

sections and advanced into a silent and apparently deserted city. The men were insanely ordered not to load, and two companies being slow in unloading, were compelled to take out their gun-flints. The English had got deep into the town, when suddenly, on the discharge of a cannon, every roof swarmed with Spaniards and negroes. A rain of bullets came from every side on the surprised assailants. Guns opened with grape-shot from trenched batteries dug across the streets, and with the avalanches of bricks and stones, hand-grenades mixed very unpleasantly. In vain Lieutenant-Colonel Duff forced his way into some houses after a severe struggle; he was surrounded and compelled to surrender. Lieutenant William Mackie, who afterwards led the forlorn hope at Rodrigo, was severely wounded; Lieutenant George Bury struck down a Spanish grenadier officer in single combat, but his enemy, in dying, bit Bury's middle finger off, bone and all. In this miserable affair the young Irish regiment lost two hundred and twenty privates killed and wounded, and twenty officers. The following day General Whitelock evacuated Buenos Ayres on the release of the captured regiments.

The colonel of the Eighty-eighth, General John Reid, dying in 1807, the senior lieutenant-colonel, W. Carr Beresford, succeeded him. In 1809, the regiment was sent to Lisbon, to join in driving the French out of Spain; and the battle of Talavera soon gave scope to its energies. In this great struggle, where sixteen thousand British troops engaged, and drove off, thirty thousand French, the Connaught Rangers did not fire a shot, but had nevertheless to bear patiently a heavy cannonade. Though half the soldiers were raw militia-men, they stood firm as the oldest veterans.

On the first day the Eighty-eighth held the wood on the river Alberche, and had to retire, with steady front, in line, under a heavy fire. During the retreat, the soldiers were forbidden to fire unless they could cover their men. Corporal Thomas Kelly, of the fourth company, was the first who pulled a trigger; going up to the adjutant, Lieutenant Stewart, and pointing out a French officer, he said:

"Do you see that officer, sir, standing by the olive-tree in front of me? He is a dangerous man, and has been giving directions to his soldiers that won't serve us; four of the company have been hit already; but if you will allow me, I think I could do for him."

"Try, then, Kelly," was the reply.

Kelly fired. The French officer fell, and the men, disconcerted by the loss of their leader, ceased to harass the regiment, which continued its retreat through the wood, and took post upon a hill on the left of the allied army, which was the key of the position.

The next day, the real battle day, the grenadiers of the Eighty-eighth, says Lieutenant Grattan, commanded by Captain Dunne, suffered a severe loss; but he, with immovable coolness, walked up and down in front of his company. When a man fell, he would turn round and ask his sergeant the name of the soldier struck down. At last a round shot passed through the ranks, and carried off the heads of two of the grenadiers.

"Who is that, now?" asked Dunne.

"Casey and Dumphy," was the reply of the sergeant.

"I am sorry for both, but particularly for Dumphy; he was in debt to the amount of four pounds fifteen shillings and tenpence."

The Eighty-eighth, on this glorious day, lost in killed and wounded six officers, and one hundred and thirty non-commissioned officers and privates. Captains Blake, Graydon, and Whittle, and Lieutenant M'Carthy were killed, and Lieutenant Whitelaw was wounded.

Hitherto this fiery regiment had had ill-luck. It could win no glory in Holland, it had had hard rubs in South America, and had not been able to join in the rush forward at Talavera; but its time had now come. The "boys," as the Rangers called themselves, were to blood their swords at Busaco. At the close of 1809, the Eighty-eighth were brigaded with the Forty-fifth and Seventy-fourth, and formed part of the Third Division, under the command of the famous Picton. The men of the Eighty-eighth had acquired a laxity of morals in Portugal, which caused the indignation of the stern Picton, who arrived determined to maintain discipline. In the first review of the division, the Eighty-eighth distinguished itself by its marching and echelon movements, upon which Colonel Wallace especially prided himself. But nothing could propitiate Picton. The parade was just about to be dismissed, when some Portuguese militia marched up two men of the Eighty-eighth, who had stolen a goat. They were at once tried by a drum-head court martial and (much to the indignation of the Eighty-eighth) flogged in the

presence of the whole division. The general, then turning to the Eighty-eighth, said :

"You are not known in the army by the name of the Connaught Rangers, but by the name of the Connaught foot-pads."

The Irish blood boiled at this. Colonel Wallace immediately communicated to Picton his sense of the injustice of his language, for which Picton afterwards apologised, saying he had found the corps much better than he had expected. It was about this time that Picton, one day riding near the river Coa with his aide-de-camp, saw, on the other side, a Connaught Ranger with a huge goat on his back.

"Pray, sir," said, or rather roared, Picton, addressing the soldier, "what have you got there?"

"A thieving puckawn, sir."

"A what?"

"A goat, sir," replied the soldier. "In Ireland we call a buck goat a puckawn. I found the poor baste sthraying, and he looks as if he was as hungry as myself."

"What are you going to do with him, sir?" inquired Picton.

"Do with him, is it? Bring him with me to be sure. Do you think I'd lave him here to starve?"

"Ah, you villain! you are at your old tricks, are you? I know you, though you don't think it."

"And I know you, sir," answered the soldier, "and the 'boys of Connaught' know you too; and I'd be sorry to do anything that would be displaising to your honour; and sure, iv you'd only let me, I'd send your sarvent a leg iv him to dhress for your dinner, for, by my soul! your honour looks could and angry—hungry, I mane."

He then held up the old goat by the beard, and shook it at Captain Tyler, the general's aide-de-camp, and taking it for granted that he had made a peace-offering to the general, or probably not caring one straw whether he had or not, went away with his burden, and was soon lost sight of among a grove of chestnut-trees.

"Well," said Picton, turning to Tyler, who was nearly convulsed with laughter, "that fellow has some humour, and, like a good out-post soldier, has taken care to occupy an unassailable position."

This was always a favourite story of Picton's.

And now for Busaco. Massena, in the summer of 1810, had reduced Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, and was threaten-

ing to "drive the English leopards into the sea." Our Portuguese levies had not yet faced French fire. Our army lined a precipitous range of hills, on which stood the village and convent of Busaco—the old Second Division was on the right, Crawford and the Light Division on the left, the Third Division in the centre. At daylight a cloud of French skirmishers came up the ravines, followed by two French columns. On the left the intrepid Ney broke through the stinging swarms of English riflemen, and pushed up the ridge, soon to be pitchforked down again by the united bayonets of the Forty-third, Fifty-second, and Ninety-fifth, leaving many dead, and the French leader, General Simeon, and many officers and privates wounded.

In the mean time our left centre was struck at by General Regnier, and Massena's second corps. Picton's (the Third Division) had now to bear the brunt of the storm. The Eighty-eighth occupied the west of the sierra, near the left, not far from Wellington. Regnier advanced with a tremendous rush, his drummers beating the *pas de charge*, which our soldiers always called "old trowsers." Through the mountain mist crowds of sharpshooters ran forward, and spread in pairs. Our light troops were driven back. The French column was coming up fast. Colonel Wallace coolly reinforced the advance with two hundred men from each of his battalion companies, and kept the French in check, but again our light troops had to fall back. The French were rushing on with tremendous shouting, after their manner. Colonel Wallace then addressed the "boys," and said:

"The time, so long wished for by you and by me, is at length arrived. You have now an opportunity of distinguishing yourselves. Be cool, be steady, but, above all, pay attention to my word of command—you know it well. You see how these Frenchmen press on; let them do so. When they rush a little nearer us, I will order you to advance to that mount. Look at it, lest you might mistake what I say. Now, mind what I tell you; when you arrive at that spot, we will charge, and I have now only to add, the rest must be done by yourselves. Press on, then, to the muzzle, I say, Connaught Rangers. Press on the rascals!"

The Eighty-eighth received this address, not with excited Celtic shouts, but with deep-drawn breath and ominous silence. Many men had already fallen. The colours

had been pierced by several bullets, and three of the colour-sergeants were wounded, when Captain Dunne came in and reported that not only was a French column advancing, but that a body of tirailleurs had occupied a cluster of rocks on the left, and more of the enemy were moving to cut in between the Eighty-eighth and the Forty-fifth. Colonel Wallace asked Captain Dunne if half the battalion could do the business.

"No," was the reply. "You will want every man you can bring forward."

"Very well," said the colonel, "I am ready. Soldiers, mind what I have said to you."

Colonel Wallace instantly threw the battalion into column right in front, and through a butchering fire reached the rocks, and filed out the grenadiers and two battalion companies, ordering them to carry the rocks while he tackled the main body. Four companies of the Forty-fifth were already almost annihilated, when the Eighty-eighth, with resistless fury, threw themselves on the French column of five regiments. They received one dreadful discharge of musketry. Before a second could be thrown in, they had pushed through the French column and hurled it down the mountain side, strewing the declivity with dead and dying. The "boys" had literally torn the French column to pieces. In the mean time the other three companies had cleared the rocks by a hard hand-to-hand grapple. The French, unable to escape, fought desperately. Captain Dansey was three times wounded, but he killed three Frenchmen, and Captain Dunne was on the very verge of death. He had made a fruitless cut at a rifleman above his head, the man's bayonet was a few inches from his heart, his finger on the trigger, when Dunne shouted, "Brazill!" the name of one of his sergeants. Brazill instantly sprang forward and pinned the Frenchman to the rock with his halberd, falling as he made the lunge which saved his captain. In the chasms and ledges after the battle the dead French riflemen were found, some apparently sleeping against crags, others leaning forward over projecting stones, as if firing, others dashed to pieces at the foot of precipices. Colonel Wallace, finding his charger restless, fought on foot. Captain Bury and Lieutenant L. Mackie especially distinguished themselves. Bury was wounded, but would not leave the field. One of his soldiers named Pollard, though shot through the shoulder, threw

off his knapsack, and fought beside his officers. A bullet piercing the plate of Pollard's cap, passed through his brain, and the faithful fellow fell dead at Bury's feet. Lieutenant Heppenstall (killed at Foz d'Aronce in 1811), a young officer, whose first appearance under fire was on this occasion, was frequently mixed with the enemy's riflemen, and shot two of them, one being an officer. Lieutenant William Nickle, serving with the light company, was deliberately singled out by a Frenchman, whose third shot passed through his body, but without killing him; as he was proceeding to the rear, the same Frenchman, cheering at the same time, sent a fourth shot after him, which knocked off his cap. "Get on, Nickle," said Heppenstall. "I'll stop that fellow's crowing." He waited quietly till the man appeared within sure distance, and then revenged his wounded comrade by shooting the Frenchman dead. Corporal Thomas Kelly of the fourth company (the same man who shot the French officer in the retreat through the wood near the Alberche at Talavera), was severely wounded in the thigh at the commencement of the charge against the French column, but he continued to run with his company down the hill, until he fell through exhaustion and loss of blood.

"If we were ever placed," says an officer of the regiment, "as we often were, in any critical situation, Colonel Wallace would explain to the soldiers what he expected them to do; if in danger of being charged by cavalry, he would say, 'Mind the square. You know I often told you that if ever you had to form it from line, in face of an enemy, you'd be in an ugly way, and have plenty of noise about you; mind the tellings off, and don't give the false touch to your right or left hand man; for if you were own brothers, you'll be running here and there like a parcel of frightened pullets!'"

Lord Wellington, who saw and fully appreciated the Busaco charge, rode up to the Eighty-eighth regiment, and seizing Colonel Wallace by the hand, said, "Upon my honour, Wallace, I never witnessed a more gallant charge than that just now made by your regiment." The dead and wounded of the Second, Fourth, Thirty-sixth, and Irish Brigade (four French regiments which were opposed to the Eighty-eighth singly) lay thick on the face of the hill, and their numbers gave ample testimony that the Eighty-eighth deserved the praises bestowed upon them by their general.

The loss of the Eighty-eighth in this battle, so glorious to them, was nine officers and one hundred and twenty-four rank and file, killed or wounded. Whether the Eighty-eighth in these desperate charges raised the old faction-fight cry, so terrible to the enemy, of "Faugh a Ballagh"—"Clear the way"—we do not know, for it was the Eighty-seventh at Barossa who especially used that fierce war-cry, but we are sure that those rattling Irish tunes, Garryowen and I'm a Brisk Irish Lad, led them on in many a fight like this, and many a toilsome march over plain and sierra.

At Sabugal the Eighty-eighth got entangled in a storm of snow and hail, and Regnier's corps escaped them without crossing bayonets. The third and decisive day of Fuentes d'Onoro the fight was for a village with an old chapel on a crag at one end of it. The Highlanders were fighting in the churchyard, the Ninth French Light Infantry had already penetrated as far as the chapel, and were preparing to debouch upon our centre. Our troops were nearly worn out when Colonel Pakenham, always in the front, said:

"Tell Wallace of the Eighty-eighth to come down and drive these fellows back; he will do the thing properly."

The battalion advanced in columns by sections, left in front, in double quick time. The soldiers on each side the wall leading to the chapel cheered the regiment loudly as it advanced; but the Eighty-eighth gave no reply; there was no talking, no huzzaing; the men moved on smartly under a heavy fire, steady and silent as if on parade. Ensign Grattan, who led the first company, looked round anxiously at his men as the French came in view at the corner of the chapel. They were not pale, as soldiers usually are when going into close fight, but were flushed with the trot down the road. When he turned to look the men replied with a cheer that showed their hearts were swelling for the fight. A battery of eight pounders now opened upon them from an olive-grove on the other side of the river, and the Ninth regiment and some hundred veterans of the Imperial Guard rushed on them firing. The Eighty-eighth replied with a push of the bayonet, and drove the enemy through the streets into the river (one hundred and fifty of the Imperial Guard were shot and bayoneted in one cul-de-sac); for there was no time for reflection, and the fire was hot. Captain Muir, of the Eighty-eighth, was peeping over a

wall with his glass to his eye, when a bullet struck him in the forehead. Many of the French soldiers hid in the chimneys. Lieutenant George Johnson, when the place was cleared, climbed up to the top of a stone cross in a square on the river-side, and waved his hat in defiance of the enemy. After all, the regiment lost fewer men than was expected; every one was so steady, and the men were so rapid in closing with the enemy. One officer was killed and four wounded, while seven rank and file were shot, and fifty-three wounded.

Says an officer of the Rangers: "It was the fashion with some to think that the Eighty-eighth were a parcel of wild, rattling rascals, ready for a row, but loosely officered. The direct contrary was the fact. Perhaps in the whole British army there was not one regiment so severely drilled. If a man coughed in the ranks he was punished; if the sling of the firelock, for an instant, left the hollow of the shoulder when it should not, he was punished; and if he moved his knapsack when standing at ease, he was punished, more or less, of course, according to the offence. The consequence of this system, exclusively Colonel Wallace's, was that the men never had the appearance of being fatigued upon a march, and when they halted, you did not see them thrusting their firelocks against their packs to support them. Poor Bob Hardyman, of the Forty-fifth, said the reason the Connaught Rangers carried their packs better than any other regiment was, 'that they never had anything in them,' and, to speak candidly, we never had more than was necessary, and in truth it was very little that satisfied our fellows." It was falsely asserted that the Rangers sold their cartridges for aguadiente, and substituted in their place pieces of painted wood. Nevertheless it must be allowed that the Connaught men were not over-scrupulous in the matter of a stray pig or goat, and were known on festive occasions to boil geese in (what we fear we must call) stolen Catalonian wine.

At the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, the Rangers had fighting enough, even for Irishmen. The forlorn hope was to be led by a subaltern of the Eighty-eighth. Directly Major Thompson (then commander) told his officers this, Lieutenant Mackie stepped forward, dropped his sword, and said:

"Major, I am ready for the service."

"Go, then," replied the major, "pressing his hand, "go, and God bless you!"

There was then a rush among the Eighty-eighth to get chosen for the twenty of the forlorn hope, and great difficulty arose in selection. The Light Division was to attack the small breach, the Third Division the grand breach. Picton's speech was very brief:

"Rangers of Connaught. It is not my intention to expend any powder this evening. We will do this business with cold iron."

"The first," says Grattan, "who reached the top after the last discharge, were three of the Eighty-eighth. Sergeant Pat Brazill—the brave Brazill of the grenadier company, who saved his captain's life at Busaco—called out to his two companions, Swan and Kelly, to unscrew their bayonets and follow him; the three men passed the trench in a moment, and engaged the French cannoneers hand to hand—a terrific but short combat was the consequence. Swan was the first, and was met by the two gunners on the right of the gun; but, no way daunted, he engaged them, and plunged his bayonet into the breast of one; he was about to repeat the blow upon the other, but before he could disentangle the weapon from his bleeding adversary, the second Frenchman closed upon him, and with a sabre cut severed his left arm from his body a little above the elbow; he fell from the shock, and was on the point of being massacred, when Kelly, after having scrambled under the gun, rushed onward to succour his comrade. He bayoneted two Frenchmen on the spot, and at this instant Brazill came up—three of the five gunners lay lifeless, while Swan, resting against an ammunition chest, was bleeding to death. It was now equal numbers, two against two, but Brazill, in his over anxiety to engage, was near losing his life at the onset; in making a lunge at the man next him, his foot slipped upon the bloody platform, and he fell forward against his antagonist, but as both rolled under the gun, Brazill felt the socket of his bayonet strike hard against the buttons of the Frenchman's coat. The remaining gunner, in attempting to escape under the carriage from Kelly, was killed by some soldiers of the Fifth, who then now reached the top of the breach, and seeing the serious dispute at the gun, pressed forward to the assistance of the three men of the Connaught Rangers."

Lieutenant Faris was engaged during the assault in a desperate hand-to-hand conflict. Two French grenadiers, observ-

ing him far in advance of his men, attacked him. One fired and immediately ran away, his bullet passing through the lieutenant's coat; the other then fired, wounding him slightly in the thigh, and closed upon him with the bayonet, making a thrust at the body. Lieutenant Faris parried this with his sabre, but received a severe wound in the leg; a struggle then took place, from which Lieutenant Faris at length succeeded in disengaging himself, and killed his adversary by a sabre-cut on the head. By this time he was completely exhausted, and was obliged to be carried into a neighbouring house. His wounds, though severe, were neither of them dangerous, and he soon recovered.

There was an unpleasant dispute after this siege between Lieutenant Mackie of the Eighty-eighth and Lieutenant Gurwood of the Fifty-second, as to who first received the governor's sword; but there is no doubt that the governor gave his sword to Gurwood, who led the forlorn hope at the lesser breach.

At Badajoz a detachment of the fiery Eighty-eighth was commanded by Captain Oates and Lieutenant Johnson (wounded at Ciudad Rodrigo.) Oates, in one of the attacks, seeing that the ditch though deep was narrow, cleverly threw three ladders across from the glacis into the mouth of an embrasure in the midst of a pelting fire of musketry and grape. He fell in the redoubt severely wounded, and Lieutenant Johnston was shot dead. Of fifteen officers only one escaped unhurt. In the final escalade Lieutenant Whitelaw fell while leading the advance. Captain Lindsay was killed while raising a ladder. Three other lieutenants perished, and one captain and four lieutenants were wounded. In the whole siege the regiment lost eight officers, five sergeants, and forty-two rank and file, while one hundred and eighty-four men were wounded.

An officer of the Eighty-eighth has described the men's talk round their camp-kettles, as he lay in his tent wounded after Badajoz: "Well," said one boy, "now it's all past and gone, wasn't it the devil's own dthroll business, the taking that same place; and wasn't Long-nose" (meaning the Duke of Wellington) "a quare lad to sthrive to get into it, seeing how it was defended? It was he that spoke to the 'boys' dacently. 'Well, boys,' says he, when he met myself and a few more aising a house of a thrifle, 'well, boys,' (for he knew the button), 'God bless your

work. It's myself that's proud to think how completely yees tuck the concate out ov the French Eighty-eighth in the castel last night.' 'Why, sir,' says I, forgetting to call him my lord, 'the divil a French Connaught Ranger ever was born that the Irish Connaught Rangers isn't able to take the concate out ov.'"

The battle of Salamanca (1812) was a great day for the Rangers, who were chosen to carry the height and guns.

"When the Third Division, under Packenham," says an eye-witness, "had crossed the flat, and were moving against the crest of hill occupied by Thomier's tirailleurs, a number of Caçadores, commanded by Major Haddock, were in advance of us. The moment the French fire opened, these troops, which had been placed to cover our advance, lay down on their faces, not for the purpose of taking aim more accurately, but in order to save their own sconces from the French fire. Haddock dismounted from his horse, and began belabouring with the flat side of his sabre the dastardly troops he had the misfortune to command, but in vain; all sense of shame had fled after the first discharge of grape and musketry, and poor Haddock might as well have attempted to move the great cathedral of Salamanca as the soldiers of His Majesty the King of Portugal.

"At this time a colonel of the Twenty-second French regiment stepped out of the ranks, and shot Major Murphy dead at the head of his regiment, the Eighty-eighth. A number of officers were beside Murphy. It is not easy at such a moment to be certain who is the person singled out. The two officers who carried the colours of the regiment, and who were immediately in the rear of the mounted officers, thought that the shot was intended for one of them. Lieutenant Moriarty, carrying the regimental flag, called out:

"'That fellow is aiming at me.'

"'I hope so,' replied Lieutenant D'Arcy, who carried the other colour, with great coolness; 'I hope so, for I thought he had me covered.'

"D'Arcy was not much mistaken. The ball that killed Murphy, after passing through him, struck the staff of the flag carried by D'Arcy, and also carried away the button and part of the strap of his epaulet. This fact is not told as an extraordinary occurrence, that the ball which killed one man should strike the coat of him who happened to stand in his rear, for such casualties were by no means un-

common with us; but I mention it as a strong proof of the great coolness of the British line in their advance against the enemy's column."

At the battle of the Pyrenees a French reinforcement, commanded by an officer of distinction, rushed forward to retrieve the tarnished honour of their nation. A detachment of the Eighty-eighth lay behind a low ditch, and waited until the French approached to within a few yards of them. They came on in gallant style, headed by their brave commanding officer, who was most conspicuous, being several paces in front of his men. The soldiers of the two armies, posted at a distance, and lookers on at this national trial, shouted with joy as they beheld their respective comrades on the eve of engaging with each other. But this feeling on the part of the French was but of short duration, for at the first fire their detachment turned tail, leaving their brave commandant, with many others, mortally wounded, behind. Captain Robert Nickle at once ran up to his bleeding opponent, and rendered him every assistance in his power. He then advanced alone, with his handkerchief tied on the point of his sword, which he held up as a token of amity, and, thus reassured, some of the French soldiers returned without their weapons, and carried away their officer with them. They were delighted with the considerate conduct of Captain Nickle, and embraced our men on parting.

At the battle of Orthes, the Eighty-eighth fought tremendously, and killed, wounded, or took prisoners a large body of French cavalry, whose charge they had repulsed. In this affair the regiment had two hundred and seventy-seven men killed or wounded; and at Toulouse, though only three companies were engaged, they also gained much honour.

At the peace of 1814, the Eighty-eighth was ordered to Canada, and justly boasted of never losing one man by desertion during a stay of eleven months. In the Peninsula, however occasionally irregular, the Eighty-eighth was always famed for gay endurance of hardships, and an absence of deserters. In six years, says the regimental chronicler, this young regiment lost forty-three officers, twenty-eight of whom died in the field, and the rest from wounds, fatigue, or climate, and its loss in the same time of non-commissioned officers and privates amounted to two thousand, yet owing to the prejudice of Picton, who never recommended an officer of the Eighty-eighth, their brilliant

services did not obtain for the regimental colours the glorious word "Pyrenees"—an honour it had so richly deserved.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ERROR," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XLV. WILL GARDINER IN THE FORTRESS.

WILL GARDINER came out much excited, and in a glow of generous enthusiasm, such as is popularly supposed to attend on the performance of a noble action. He felt a little chill as he met the expectant face of his wife, and remembered that he had come away without performing the task which he had undertaken. Still he had succeeded to a certain extent.

"Well," she said, eagerly, "it is all settled? Is it time?"

"The poor fellow," said Will, full of sympathy, "he is as helpless as a child. But I am afraid of that Spooner and his gang."

"Afraid! Nonsense, are you a child? You are not such a baby as to——"

"No, I hope not. But the fellow has thrown off the mask, taken the airs of a bully, put his foot down, and all that. He said as good as that he would fight to hold his place."

"And you—you will surely not let yourself be put down by a bully of his sort. Go back at once, and take possession."

"I am going back," said Will, mulishly. "You need not talk in that way. Not that I think it will be worth our while taking much trouble about the poor fellow. He said something about the money being all gone, or that he had none left; but, by Jove! he contradicted himself afterwards, for he talked of leaving it all to the animals. I don't understand it."

"I do, then, perfectly. It proves that his mind is rambling—that he can't fix it on one idea."

"No, he is not rambling," said Will. "But still he certainly told me two different stories."

"All old women's tales. He is an artful old schemer, and wants to trick us all round. Go back at once, or they will steal a march upon you. Get your things and take possession, and don't let them move you an inch from the spot. You know the state we are in, and that we can't afford to wait a day. Show that you have some sense or wit, and more brains

than the miserable crew who are in this place. I know that old men with money take a malicious delight in trying to humbug people about. Show that you can humbug him."

Will Gardiner had never heard his wife speak to him with such energy before. It overpowered him, and he felt from that moment that she had a strength of mind and a will that was superior to his own. However, he did not make any open protest; but retired silently, determined to carry out his own little plan. For it happily so fell out, that he could do so according to the letter of his instructions, though not after their spirit.

"I'll not raise a finger against the poor old fellow—if I can help it," he added, putting in a useful qualification.

Late that night he returned with a modest carpet-bag, and presented himself at the door. While he waited, he was preparing for a violent rush, and some vigorous bluster, in anticipation of serious resistance; but, to his surprise, he found that the "Gorgon sister," as he was fond of styling her, welcomed his entrance, and allowed him to pass. She even led the way up-stairs.

"This is the room I have got ready for you," she said, opening a door. "Mr. Doughty wishes that you should be made comfortable."

Will Gardiner looked at her with suspicion.

"Why, what does this mean, ma'am?" he said. "The wind looks as though it were changed."

"Not at all," she said, coldly. "My brother thinks it is not prudent, considering Mr. Doughty's state, to oppose any wish of his. He told you he did not intend to take any further share of responsibility—after to-morrow, at least."

Mr. Gardiner was not quite satisfied with these explanations, but established himself in his new room, and then repaired to Mr. Doughty's, where he was welcomed.

That gentleman was wonderfully restored. Nay, he seemed almost well again. The sense of the peril in which he stood seemed to have driven away all feeling of ailment. But his eyes burned with an angry glow of indignation against the wretches who were closing in round him. He had an eagerness to defeat their purpose. Long the two sat together, and when they wished each other good-night, Mr. Gardiner went his way with a wondering expression.

"Was there ever such a turn?" he said to himself. "No matter, I'll stand by Old Doughty to the end and see the finish."

CHAPTER XLVI. THE DUEL.

THE following morning was to usher in a day of momentous excitement for the various actors in the Brickford drama.

Early that morning a new guest had arrived at Crockley's Family Hotel. This was known to be one Doctor Craggs, who came without luggage, save indeed a sort of professional hand-bag, which might contain papers, or surgical instruments, or shaving materials. He was a quick-eyed gentleman, with a sort of treasury clerk manner.

By-and-bye, Doctor Spooner came to call, and was shown up to his room. Later arrived Lady Duke with her husband, and Mr. Birkenshaw the solicitor.

Waiters, boots, and chambermaid wondered at the little gathering outside the family hotel. Two stout men, each chewing a straw, loitered, as if waiting instructions. The party remained up-stairs for half an hour, and then all descended together. Lady Duke's carriage was waiting, but a fly was called, in which the two doctors seated themselves with Mr. Birkenshaw. Lady Duke and her husband entered their own carriage. The hour had come. The combined assault on the luckless Doughty was ready for execution.

It so happened that Mr. Nagle, very forlorn and draggled, was wandering past the family hotel door, and was attracted by the sort of little cavalcade now about setting forth. He noted the strange figure that was seated by "that Spooner," and the singular and almost ominous attendance of Lady Duke and husband in the other carriage. He hurried up to the first conveyance, and caught hold of its door-handle.

"I say, where are you going—what d'ye mean? What's to do?"

"Nothing," said Doctor Spooner, quietly. "Pray don't detain us."

"But where are ye going?" said Mr. Nagle, gesticulating with one hand, but retaining the door-handle with the other. "I insist on knowing. There's some villainy or scheming, I know, to be carried out at that poor fellow's house."

"Hush! hush!" said the doctor, looking round in alarm, for a crowd was gathering. "Don't make a noise here—go away."

"I shall not go away. I see the whole conspiracy now. I shall get the police in;

the law shall interfere. I am not going to have myself and my daughter swindled out of their just rights in this way."

"Look here," said the doctor, stooping down to speak in a low voice, "don't make a disturbance. If you wish you can come with us. I assure you everything will be done properly and legally. If you desire to satisfy your suspicions, you are welcome to attend. There!"

Mr. Nagle looked at him suspiciously. Then, with a fresh protest, opened the carriage door irresolutely, and took his place in the carriage. The party then drove away to Mr. Doughty's.

They went up-stairs, and found the owner sitting at his desk, busy with his papers. His friend Will Gardiner was in the room. A few moments later arrived the general, who entered not a little flustered. There was a look of good-humoured enjoyment on Mr. Doughty's face, and he did not seem in the least disturbed.

"What a large party," he said, as they entered. "To what do I owe this gathering? Are you all anxious about my health. I am much better, I assure you—all but restored."

"You think you are," said Doctor Spooner, who now spoke in a hard determined fashion. "But it is my duty to tell you that your friends are not satisfied as to your state. With this view, they have desired that you should be seen by a physician of more eminence than the humble individual who has been attending you."

"I am quite in my senses," said the patient, "if that be what you mean—though I do not owe that to the friends who have been kindly looking after me. I see no spectres at night, though I have been subject to delusions."

"That is a good sign," said Doctor Craggs. "So far so good."

"So far so good," said Mr. Doughty. "Perhaps those about me have been under greater delusions. They may have thought me interesting, captivating, wise, good, and beautiful; all because I had money. Now, curious as it may seem, all this time I HAVE HAD NO MONEY!"

The whole party started, then exchanged looks.

"Not a shilling that I can call my own. I have been like those travelling swindlers that visit towns like this, and obtain goods, and attentions, and considerations under false pretences, sometimes, indeed, going so far as to win the affections of a beautiful girl under the same false pretences. The

parallel exactly holds. You are welcome to arrest me, and carry me away to prison, for this offence; for I own to being guilty, though not with malice aforethought."

Again all the party looked at each other, Doctor Spooner glancing at his colleague with considerable satisfaction.

"I think," said he, "we need not remain. Doctor Craggs would wish to see you in private for a few moments; then we shall give you no more trouble."

Will had remained silent during this interview.

"I shall wait," he said, "as Mr. Doughty's friend, for no one here can be considered as answering to that description."

Doctor Spooner answered him in a peremptory way:

"You must not interpose here, Mr. Gardiner. It will not be tolerated, I can assure you."

"Go, Gardiner," said the patient, or victim; "leave me with these gentlemen. They will not do me any harm. I have no money, recollect. *Vacuus cantabit.*"

Will Gardiner retired. Outside he found Lady Duke waiting, with eager face. Then all went down to the drawing-room, except the two doctors. Will could not contain himself. He went to the window, saw the carriage waiting, and the suspicious-looking men hanging about.

"You have laid your plans well," he said. "It has been an infamous scheme from beginning to end. But don't think you will succeed, Lady Duke. If I were to work every court in the kingdom, I'll circumvent you and your gang."

"I have no doubt that you will try," she said, calmly. "But I think after to-day there can be no doubt of the man's state. You heard him yourself deny that he had any money."

"Yes I did. Some of his sarcastic jesting. I've heard plenty of rich people deny they had money."

"I'll raise the whole town," said Mr. Nagle, whose protest had a certain feebleness after the more hearty one of Will Gardiner. "It's monstrous—vile!"

Down came the two doctors very hurriedly.

"We must lose no time," said Doctor Spooner. "You are satisfied on this

examination, Doctor Craggs, that Mr. Doughty is of unsound mind?"

"I think he is under some delusion at present, and that he has received a sudden shock. He had clearly set his affections on a particular object, and by dwelling too much on that subject, has become unsettled. Restraint in a proper place and supervision are absolutely necessary, and I am prepared to sign a certificate."

"Then," said Doctor Spooner, "we had better call up the people."

"I can't see this done," said Will Gardiner, vehemently. "I oppose it, and shall oppose it to the death. He shan't be taken from his own house in this way. Call up your fellows, and if one of them dares to go up to that bedroom, I'll fling him over the banisters. So now look out."

"You will oppose us in this step, which his relations have sanctioned?" the doctor said, looking at him fixedly.

"Tooth and nail, hand and foot," said Will, defiantly. "I promised to stand by him, and I shall. He is sick and weak, and doesn't know what you would do to him."

"Good, good," said the other. "I merely wanted to know your intentions. You can begin your opposition when you please; but you will be sorry for it."

Mr. Gardiner strode out promptly, and with an elation in his face. He walked down-stairs to the hall, and threw open the door.

At once a hand was laid upon his shoulder, a piece of paper thrust into his face, and a gruff voice said something about "a copy." But the universal language in which "arrest" is spoken was intelligible. The bill of sale—the fruits of the old extravagance—rushed upon him, and showed him the whole story.

Without a moment's delay he was put into a cab, and taken away. And thus Mr. Doughty was delivered into the hands of his enemies, who were looking from the window.

On May 17th will be commenced
A NEW SERIAL STORY,
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YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

By the Author of "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

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